
H E N R Y;

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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IN TWO VOLUMES

H E N R Y;

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF ARUNDEL.

VOL. II.

*Ficta voluptatis causâ sint proxima veris,
Nec quodcunque volet poscat sibi fabula credi.*

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HENRY.

H E N R Y.

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.

*An humble Apology for Authors in general, with some
modest Hints at their peculiar Usefulness.*

I HOPE the candid reader now and then calls to mind how much more nimbly he travels over these pages than the writer of them did. When our dulness is complained of, it would be but charity in him to reflect how much pains that same dulness has cost us; more, he may be assured, than our brighter intervals, where we sprung nimbly forward with an easy weight, instead of toiling like a carrier's horse, whose slow and heavy pace argues the load he draws, and the labour he endures: alas! for us poor Novelists, if there was no mercy for dull authors, and our countrymen, like the barbarous Libethrians of old, should take it into their minds to banish music and the muses out of the land, and murder every Orpheus that did not fiddle to their taste. They should consider, that the man, who makes a book, makes a very pretty piece of furniture; and if they will but consign us to a quiet station on a shelf, and give us wherewithal to cover us in a decent trim, the worst amongst us will serve to fill up the file, and stop a gap in the ranks.

'Tis hard indeed to toil, as we sometimes do, to our own loss and disappointment; to sweat in the field of fame, merely to reap a harvest of chaff, and pile up reams of paper for the worm to dine upon. It is a cruel thing to rack our brains for nothing, run our jaded fancies to a stand-still, and then lie down at the conclusion of our race, a carcase for the critics. And what is our crime all the while? A mere mistake between our readers and ourselves, occasioned by a small miscalculation of our capacities and their candour; all which would be avoided, if happily for us they had not the wit to find out our blunders, or, happily for them, had all that good nature for us that we generously exercise towards ourselves. If once they could bring their tempers to this charming complacency, they might depend upon having books in plenty; authors would multiply like polypusses, and the press would be the happiest mother in the kingdom.

How many worthy gentlemen are there in this blessed island of our's, who have so much time upon their hands, that they do not know what to do with it? I am aware how large and respectable a portion of this enlightened nation center their delights in the chace, and draw an elegant resource from the sagacity of the hound and the vigour of the horse: but they cannot always be on the saddle; the elements they cannot command; and frost and snow will lock them up within their castle walls: there it is possible that solitude may surprise them, and dismiss them for a time to the solace of their own lucubrations: now, with all possible respect for these resources, I should think it may sometimes be worth their while to make experiments of other people's lucubrations, when they have worn out their own, for those must be but sorry thoughts, which are not better than not thinking at all; and the least they can gain by an author is a nap.



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The ingenuity of man has invented a thousand contrivances for innocently disposing of idle time ; let us, therefore, who write books, have only the idlers on our side, in gratitude for the amusement we give them, and let the rest of the world be as splenetic as they will, we may set their spleen at naught ; the majority will be with us.

If a querulous infant is stilled by a rattle, the maker of the rattle has saved somebody's ears from pain and persecution ; grant, therefore, that a novel is nothing better than a toy for children of a larger growth and more unruly age, society has some cause to thank the writer of it ; it may have put an aching head to rest ; it may have cheered the debtor in his prison, or the country squire in a hard frost. Traders will cry up the commodity they deal in, therefore I do not greatly insist on the praises which some that write books have bestowed on book-writing, but I do observe, that great respect is paid to an author by those who cannot read him, wherefore I conclude, those who can read, and do not praise him, are only silent because they want words to express their admiration and gratitude ; whilst those sanguine flatterers, who, in the excess of their respect for our persons, cry down our performances, give evident proof how much higher they had pitched their expectations of what our talents would produce, than our productions could make good ; but though in their zeal for our reputations, they tell us how ill we write, they seldom neglect at the same time to shew us how we might have written still worse.

Some over-wise people have pretended to discover, that this altercation between author and critic is nothing more than a mere plot and contrivance to play into each others hands, like Mountebank and Zany ; but this is over-acted sagacity, and an

affectation of finding more mysteries in the art of authorship, than really belong to it; for my part, I believe it is a business of a more simple nature than most which can be taken up, and that authors in general require nothing more than pen, ink, and paper to set up with. In ancient times, the trade was in few hands, and the work seems then to have been composed with much pains and forethought; materials were collected with great care, and put together with consummate accuracy and attention; every part was fitted to its place, polished to the height, and finished to perfection; there were inspectors on the part of the public, men of sound judgment and fully competent to the office, who brought the work to a standard of rule and measure, and insisted upon it, that every whole should have *a beginning, a middle, and an end*. Under these strict regulations the ancients wrote; but now that practice has made us perfect, and the trade is got into so many hands, these regulations are done away, and so far from requiring of us a *beginning, middle, and end*, it is enough if we can shew a head and a tail; and it is not always that even these can be made out with any tolerable precision. As our authors write with less labour, our critics review with less care, and for every one fault that they mark in our productions, there probably might be found one hundred that they overlook. It is an idle notion, however, to suppose that therefore they are in league and concert with the authors they revise; for where could that poor fraternity find a fund to compensate them for suffering a vocation once so reputable to fall into such utter disgrace under their management as to be no longer the employ of a gentleman? As for our readers, on whom we never fail to bestow the terms of candid, gentle, courteous, and others of the like soothing cast,

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cast, they certainly deserve all the fair words we can give them, for it is not to be denied, but that we make occasionally very great demands upon their candour, gentleness, and courtesy, exercising them frequently and fully with such trials as require those several endowments in no small proportion. The farther I advance therefore in this work, the civiler I will be; and to those readers who will follow me into this third volume, I may with justice apply the epithets of patient, persevering, faithful, and so on, with a *crescendo* in my strain, till the piece is concluded.

But are there not also fastidious, angry, querulential readers: readers with full stomachs, who complain of being surfeited and overloaded with the story-telling trash of our circulating libraries? It cannot be altogether denied, but still they are readers: if the load is so heavy upon them as they pretend it is, I will put them in the way of getting rid of it, by reviving the law of the ancient Cæcæans, who obliged their artists to hawk about their several wares, carrying them on their backs, till they found purchasers to ease them of the burthen. Was this law put in force against authors, few of us, I doubt, would be found able to stand under the weight of our own unpurchased works.

But whilst the public is contented with things as they are, where is the wonder if the reform is never made by us till they begin it in themselves? Let their taste lead the fashion, and our productions must accord to it. Whilst the Cookeries of Hannah Glasse outcirculate the Commentaries of Blackstone, authors will be found, who prefer the compilation of receipts to that of records, as the easier and more profitable task of the two. If puerilities are pleasing, men will write *ut pueris placeant*.

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When Demosthenes was engaged in the defence of a certain citizen of Athens, who was brought to trial upon a charge of a capital nature, neither the importance of the cause, nor the eloquence of the pleader, could fix the attention of the judges who were sitting on the trial: the orator, observing their levity, on a sudden stopt short in the midst of his harangue, and addressing himself to the court,—“Listen to me,” he cried, “ye venerable judges, for a few moments, and I will tell you a merry tale:—A certain young man, having occasion to take a journey from this city of our’s to Megara, hir’d an ass for the job; but being extremely incommoded on the way by a scorching sun, which smote him with intolerable heat at noon, he dismounted from his beast, and made free to take post under the shade of his carcase; upon this the ass-owner, who accompanied him, remonstrated with great vehemence, contending that his ass was let for the journey simply and precisely, and that the service now required of him was extra-conditional and illegal: the traveller with equal vehemence maintain’d, that he was warranted in the use he made of him, and that having hir’d the ass in substance, he was entitled to the benefit of his shadow into the bargain: the question was open to controversy, and the parties went to trial on the case.”—Here Demosthenes ceased, and taking up his brief, prepared to leave the court: the judges seeing this, called out to him to return and go on with his pleading.—“For shame, ye men of Athens,” cried the indignant orator, “ye can lend your ears to the story of an ass, but will not bestow your attention upon a trial that involves the life or death of a fellow-citizen.”

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CHAPTER II.

Our Hero undergoes a strict Examination by a certain Judge called Conscience.

AS soon as our hero had brought Blachford to consent to his disinterested proposal, he took immediate measures for securing the success of it. To bring the infant and its mother to an interview with the dying penitent was his first object. The woman, who had the child at nurse, did not live above two miles off, so that a messenger would soon fetch her over: Susan, indeed, was at a greater distance, but the day yet served for bringing her from Manstock; and Henry immediately sat down and wrote the following note:

“ Dear Susan,

“ A business, in which you are greatly interested, requires your presence in this place; Mr. Blachford’s life is so precarious, that not an hour is to be lost: I recommend it to you therefore to state this to your amiable lady, and, with her permission, come away directly in the chaise, that will attend for that purpose.

“ Your’s sincerely,

“ HENRY.”

Whilst Henry was writing this note, young Tom Weevil, who had got notice of his arrival, opportunely called upon him, and no sooner understood that he wanted a messenger to Manstock house, than he zealously tendered his services for that errand, and by Henry was instructed to ride to the next market town, which luckily was in the road, and there put himself into a post chaise for the purpose

pose of conveying Susan in the most speedy and commodious manner.

This business being thus adjusted, and another messenger dispatched for the nurse and child, our hero returned to the cottage, and throwing himself into Ezekiel's wicker chair, enjoyed for some minutes, in silent reflexion, that heart-felt satisfaction, that only can result from self-approving conscience. As he meditated on the sacrifice, he was now about to make, he felt a momentary gleam of virtuous exultation, which tempted him to cry out—"O Ratcliffe! dear departed friend! thou wou'd'st have prais'd me for this deed, and if thy sainted spirit holds communication with me still, I know thou wilt regard it as a pledge of my obedience to thy fatherly instructions. But what is this I boast of? Nothing, compar'd to the severer trial that awaits me, and demands an effort strong indeed, a sacrifice from which my heart shrinks back with terror and dismay. Oh! be my guardian still; let thy protecting spirit strengthen my feeble nature, and inspire me with the resolution to fulfil the fatal promise I have made, and pay the forfeit of my folly.—Married to Fanny Claypole! —All hopes of happiness for ever blasted to repair her reputation wantonly expos'd.—Hard terms indeed, and heavy penalty I have exacted from myself in an unguarded moment; but the word is pass'd, and I must honourably make it good: and fit I shou'd, if that is the atonement she requires; for what but chance prevented the completion of my guilt? The meditation therefore in my instance is the act itself, and I am virtually her debtor to no less amount than for the loss of all that can be valuable to a modest woman. I know the plea that some wou'd make; her forwardness, her fondness, her allurements: if this were good in any case,

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case, it wou'd be so in mine; but the excuse is mean and villainous; that and that only can be my acquittal, which acquits me to myself; this cannot serve the turn; my conscience never will be quieted by evasions. 'Tis true the act was frustrated; what then? I was not quite so abandon'd as to sin in presence of a warning angel: and can I ever lose the memory of that rebuke, which the offended purity of that angel justly bestowed? Oh, Isabella! how that frown made my heart sink within me! Never again shall I have confidence to look upon that lovely face, which till that moment ever greeted me with smiles. No more shall that sweet voice salute my ears like music, as it was wont to do in the still hour of evening, when we walk'd together: those happy hours are never to return again."

Zachary Cawdle now made his appearance, having returned from his visit to Lady Crowbery—"I bring you news," said he, "of our excellent lady, that will please you; her disorder seems abated, and I flatter myself she will gain strength and spirits to carry her through her journey both by land and sea: she sets out to-morrow in the forenoon for Manstock-house, where she will repose herself for that night. I have her express commands to desire you will not fail to meet her there."—"I know not how that can be," said Henry. "She is very anxious it shou'd be, I can assure you," rejoined the Doctor, "and I believe she has very interesting matters to confer with you upon, for she said she must positively see you, as she cou'd not express all she had to say by letter; neither indeed do I hold it fit she shou'd exhaust herself in writing for any length of time. If it is your business with Mr. Blachford that stands in the way, I hope that may be dismissed before it will be necessary for you to set out to-morrow from this place."

Henry asked if her ladyship had said any thing on that subject. "Not much," Zachary replied; "she had noticed it but slightly, seeming to intimate a doubt whether it was matter of congratulation or not, which I confess," he added, "rather puzzled me to account for, as her ladyship cannot fail to know that our neighbour will, in the vulgar phrase, die fat; and let your expectations be what they may, surely a good fortune in hand is a good thing at all events."—"Most people are of that opinion," said Henry; "but her ladyship, perhaps, may think otherwise."—"Whatever she thinks," replied Zachary, "I dare say she will keep it to herself, till she meets you, and converses with you at Manstock."

To this our hero made no further answer, but turned the discourse, by enquiring after Mrs. Cawdle.—"Her Health," said the Doctor, "is no better, her temper much worse, and her enthusiasm more extravagant than ever. Blachford's situation seems to trouble her much; she has liv'd with him as a sinner, and wou'd now fain part from him like a saint; but he has refus'd all her tenders, and has given his conscience into Ezekiel's keeping: this mortifies her in a double sense, for she not only meant to send him out of the world in the true faith, but had an eye also to the good things he has to leave behind him, of which she had no objection to come in for a share; but, thanks to the fates! all that is otherwise dispos'd of. As to the state of her constitution, that is in a rapid decline from bad to worse, being only held together like a sinking vessel by the very elements that sap and undermine it. When I take my leave of her, as I shall do to-morrow, great chance if ours is not an everlasting farewell."

This said, Zachary took his leave, having many preparations

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preparations to make for his approaching departure.

Henry was not sorry to be left to his reflections, for his mind was greatly embarrassed by the message he had received from Lady Crowbery. To present himself once more at Manstock-house was painful in the extreme; to disobey the commands of a mother on so interesting a summons was an alternative not to be thought of: how to avoid the one without transgressing the other was a point of difficulty that now engrossed his thoughts; and as for Zachary's concluding account of Jemima's melancholy condition, from that it is more than probable he had carried off very little, if any, information.

The great evil of all, that sunk deepest into his mind, was his engagement to Miss Claypole, a lady very little to his taste, and the consequent loss of all hope that had respect to Isabella, a lady, whom at his heart he most ardently admired and loved. The disgrace he had incurred with himself, as well as with her, in that fatal moment of his weakness, was a cutting recollection; till then he had stood high in the good opinion of that excellent young lady; every hour that he passed in Manstock-house, whilst she was present, made this more and more manifest; even his natural humility of character could not overlook it; he saw the advances he made in her good graces, and only trembled for her danger lest they were too rapid; every look, every action that was directed towards him had an expression not to be mistaken; Susan's reports confirmed the interest that he had established in the approving heart of her lovely mistress, and the satisfaction which she took in her evening walks with him, with the innocent contrivances she had to prolong and to repeat them,

were,

were flattering indications of an attachment forming fast, if not already formed; the greater therefore was his fall from hopes so elevated; and what could he now expect from purity like her's, but absolute dismissal and contempt?

As for the measures he was now to take towards his new discovered mother, they seemed to offer nothing to his view but a maze of difficulties. To lay open to her his embarrassments, and make a full confession of his faults and misfortunes, was a task his resolution was not equal to, neither did it seem a fit subject to discourse with her upon in her present state of health and spirits. But how to keep it from her was the question; how to stop so many channels through which the disgraceful story might find its way to her, was a point not easily to be determined; how far Miss Manstock might have spread her discovery was matter of uncertainty; her delicacy would hardly be brought to continue the same intimacy with Fanny Claypole as before, and every thing was to be dreaded from that young lady's slipshod stile of talking, who would naturally make public the engagement she had entered into with him as an apology essential to her own defence; these, and many other apprehensions, that pressed upon his thoughts, were rendered doubly alarming, when he took into his consideration the character of Mr. Claypole; from him he had every thing to expect that a jealous, deep-projecting spirit could devise; he saw to what extent his influence over Sir Roger Manstock might be carried; and he had no cause to doubt him well disposed to put it to the stretch for any object that he had at heart: beset on all sides with such difficulties, and in a streight from which he spied no honourable escape, it is not to be wondered at if his thoughts wavered without any fixt resolve, embarrassed and distressed.

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One small alleviation Fortune granted him by the occupation of Ezekiel at this time with his penitent at next door; he was not present to interpose and aggravate with fruitless declamations against the incontinence of Susan May, or the enormous crime of duelling, which Henry's affair with Captain Crowbery was sure to draw upon him; when behold the whole matter brought to issue at once by the arrival of Mr. Claypole himself now at the door of the cottage, and at this very moment in the act of dismounting from his palfrey.

CHAPTER III.

Our Hero undergoes a second Examination by a certain Judge, with whom Conscience has no concern.

THOUGH the reverend gentleman, who now visited our hero in his humble cottage, was left by us, when last we attended upon him, in the mind to defer this visit to the next morning, yet second thoughts had made him change that resolve, upon the prudent recollection of the many interventions a procrastinated measure is exposed to, especially when it hangs upon the single security of a verbal promise, extorted as it were by surprise, and not deliberately given upon judgment and inclination. He therefore thought it best to steal a march upon disappointment, and without communicating his intentions to his niece, making only a slight apology to Sir Roger, mounted his horse, and proceeded upon a round trot to the village of Crowbery, pondering by the way upon the measures he was to take, and the language he was to hold, for securing the important purposes of his secret expedition.

There was an air of studied composure in his first

first approaches, with a degree of obsequious ceremony, that did not escape the penetrating observation of our hero Henry, who immediately assimilated his stile of address to that of his visitor, and kept himself on the reserve. After the usual salutations had passed and repassed between them, Claypole began to open his commission in the following manner:

“I wait upon you, Sir, on the behalf of an orphan niece, for whose happiness and reputation I have all that tender interest, which as a father, I cou’d entertain for an only child. Miss Claypole, give me leave to say, is a young lady, on whose character not the slightest imputation hitherto has been known to rest; judge therefore with what exquisite sensibility she feels the consequences of last night’s event, and with what poignant inquietude she is now waiting the confirmation of that promise, which alone can heal those feelings, and relieve her anxious mind from its suspense: she is by nature endow’d with the warmest affections; those affections you have gain’d; your fine person, engaging attentions, and amiable character have made a conquest of her heart, and love, which in colder bosoms ripens by degrees, in her’s sprung up at once to full maturity, and gave you unequivocal proofs how much you was beloved and trusted: I will not give the name of prudence to a passion of this cast; I must as a divine and moralist condemn excess in every shape; even our most virtuous propensities must have bounds set to their exertions; and errors, tho’ arising from motives the most generous, merit some reproof; yet I will confess to you, that if in any instance I cou’d find excuse for an unbounded confidence, it wou’d be in your’s, relying, as I do, with so much justice, on your honor and integrity of principle; but, Sir, the virgin fame of an untainted character

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character is delicate in the extreme; it is a blossom shrinking at the blast, withering and drooping with the touch. Those fond unguarded moments, which the sensualists call *golden opportunities*, the man of honour shou'd account as sacred, and hold the heart, which love commits into his hands, as an inviolable trust. Now it has so happened, whether casually or providentially we will not enquire, that those very proofs of confidence and affection, which must have endeared her to you, have exposed her to reproach and shame, and obliged her to fly from the society she was in to my solitary parsonage, where she is now hiding herself in retirement and exclusion from all visitors but yourself, anxiously awaiting the completion of your promise to restore her to her reputation, her happiness, and friends. It is not therefore that I harbour any doubt of your good faith; it is not that I can suppose you lost to honour, or insensible to the beauty, fortune and good qualities of my niece, that I now require a confirmation of your word of honour from your own lips, but simply that I may be authorised not only to put her inquietude to rest, but also to assure Sir Roger Manstock, whose delicacy suffers great alarm by what has pass'd beneath his roof, that there is no call for his remonstrances, nor any insult meditated to a lady under his protection, and for whose redress he holds himself responsible."

Here Claypole ceased, and Henry replied as follows:—"A very few words, Sir, will suffice to answer all you have been pleas'd to say. I perfectly well remember what I have promis'd to Miss Claypole; and I want neither menaces nor persuasions to induce me to perform it."

"Give me leave then," cried Claypole, interposing, "to felicitate you on the possession of
a lady,

a lady, whom I have the vanity to say, the best gentleman in the kingdom might be proud to call his wife. I boast not of her fortune, Sir, that is but a secondary consideration where so many admirable qualities conspire to make the union happy; and fortune, perhaps, tho' with many the first object, may have lost much of its weight, if any it ever had, in your esteem, since this great accession has so luckily devoly'd upon you."

"Truly, Sir," said Henry in reply, "Miss Claypole's fortune never weigh'd with me; and as for this extraordinary bequest of Mr. Blachford's, which was totally unthought of, 'tis evident from the recency of the event, that it cou'd never be in contemplation of that lady at the moment of our engagement. It was, as you observe, a lucky cast of chance, and therefore, I conceive, whether I may or may not be benefited by it, it does not regularly come into question between you and me."

"Not as a principal, perhaps, but collaterally it does; it gives you means which you was unprovided with before, and therefore, as a friend soon to be connected with you and in a near degree, you cannot wonder if I feel a lively interest in an event so calculated to promote your happiness."

"Right, Sir," resumed Henry; "it will promote my happiness, as all things must that please me on reflection, and enable me to say within myself, I have fulfilled the golden rule of doing as I wou'd be done by."

"That is indeed," said Claypole, gravely, "the great rule of Christian equity; but I must own I do not at this time exactly see your application of it, for I shou'd suppose the point of conscience rather lies with Blachford than with you."

"I rather think it lies with both; an act of conscience which we share between us."

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"I comprehend you now less than I did before," quoth the baffled interrogator, "will you be pleased to explain to me?"

"In one single word; Mr. Blachford has a son."

Claypole started, threw himself back in his chair, and striking his hands together, after the fashion of his patron Sir Roger, exclaimed—"Well, Sir, a son! what then? some bastard we'll suppose."

"And if we do suppose it such, what then?" said Henry, retorting his words rather acrimoniously, and pretty nearly in the same key and cadence.

Claypole paused; he recollected probably the point his question bore *ad hominem*, and coolly answered, that the law did not acknowledge persons of that description.

"But you and I are neither of us lawyers," replied our hero, softening his manner, "You are a divine, a moralist profess, and as for me, poor altho' I am, and probably in the very same predicament with this son of nature, yet I wou'd fain aspire to copy that great rule of Christian equity approv'd by you, and shew that I am not wanting in a sense of honour towards others, no less than towards Miss Claypole."

"Still I am puzzled," rejoined Claypole, "to comprehend your meaning: you tell me Blachford has a son. You have not told me that he means to leave him his estate."

"Permit me first to ask what you wou'd counsel him to do, had you his conscience in your care."

"That is a question for myself, not him: I understood that you were made his heir by will."

"And so I am," said Henry, "but my will must be consenting to the execution of the deed."

"And what shou'd hinder it?" 'Tis an atonement for a murderous attempt: he bestows upon you his fortune; he sought to take away your life."

"He

"He gave life to this innocent."

"Some beggar's brat, perhaps: Blachford was very low in his amours: a small provision may suffice for such an one."

"But I," said Henry, "am no son of Blachford's; I covet not his gold: I can forgive my enemy without a bribe, but I cannot strip the child of its inheritance to purchase the world's wealth; I cannot do it; and I think you do not wish to see me rich on such conditions."

To this the reverend visitor replied, "I shou'd have thought, young gentleman, that you had felt the smart of poverty sufficiently to warn you from encountering it afresh: an unconnected being in the world may be romantic at his own expence, but you are not this being; you have claims upon you nearer, I shou'd suppose, and dearer to you, than this brat of Blachford, which possibly some hussey fathers on him falsely; and I am unwilling to believe you seriously intend to throw good fortune from you, when you so happily might share it with a well-beloved wife."

"Had that lady ever had a share in it," replied Henry, "or had that fortune ever been but hinted at as a contingency within the scope of speculation, I should have something to account for; but you must be conscious how very recently this thing has dropt upon me; and that it is an unlookt for opportunity of being just at my own cost; no other person has a part in what I sacrifice; and what is that man's honesty, which does not reach beyond his interest? If we do well, and suffer for it, that service is acceptable. This being a christian principle, I cannot doubt but it is yours."

At these words the reverend personage assumed a look of more than ordinary gravity, in which 'tis possible some mixture of wrath might be discernible,

cernible, and thus made answer—"It is not now a question what my principles may be, but what your's are, and I suspect that; under a romantic idea of justice to others, you forget the justice due to yourself and those connected with you. If you can lavish Blachford's whole estate away at a stroke, what security have I, that you would not serve Miss Claypole's in the like manner, was it in your power? Such principles as these are dangerous to the peace and prosperity of families, and you cannot wonder if, in point of prudence, I am somewhat staggered: he that enriches beggars may make rich folks poor. What will my Lady Crowbery say to this proceeding?"

"I have not asked her."

"But it will much import you so to do. This fortune would have made you independent; you have now nothing to look to but her favour; and how is it certain, when this business shall be known, she may not think fit to withdraw it? 'Tis right at least that her intentions should be understood before we venture further. You have also been engag'd in a duel with a relation of Lord Crowbery's. These are altogether such proceedings as may cause a change of sentiment in your patroness; and what then becomes of my poor niece? I must be certified from that noble personage herself in what light she regards this most extraordinary measure."

To this Henry replied—"If you act solely for yourself in this affair, Mr. Claypole, you will act solely from your own judgment; if for your niece, you will probably consult her wishes before you take a step so totally subversive of the whole transaction, as your reference to Lady Crowbery would be."

"I don't understand you, Sir; did you propose to marry without her consent?"

"I certainly had not pledg'd her consent in my promise,

promise, and did not therefore engage more than myself to the performance of it. If Miss Claypole accepts that promise, my honour is attached to it, and I hold it sacred: if it is referred to Lady Crowbery, my responsibility is taken off, and I shall act by her decision. I hold it as a point of honour to Miss Claypole, thus to state it to you; the alternative is before you."

Mr. Claypole paused for reflection, and then demanded, "How would you advise us to proceed, when it appears that you have nothing to depend upon but the eventual bounty and protection of the Lady Crowbery? But there is yet another thing," added he, "to be explain'd: you inform'd my friend Sir Roger Manstock by a letter which I saw, that you was going out to sea with Captain Cary; I trust you have no thoughts of that."

"Pardon me, Sir, such is my full intention."

"Is that consistent," cried Claypole, "with your promise to my niece?"

"Perfectly so; she will have no cause to complain of it."

"But will Sir Roger Manstock, think you, not oppose his nephew's taking you on board his ship, under such circumstances?"

"I should much fear he will," replied Henry, "if you exert your influence to dispose him so to do; in that case I must take some other means."

"Then you are resolved at all events to go."

"I am."

"And what to do, permit me to enquire?"

"I hope," said Henry, "you will not press me on that question, seeing we do not treat entirely upon confidence; had we so done, I should hold nothing back. The affair is now entirely with Miss Claypole; in her hands I deposit my honour and my destiny; if she accepts them unconditionally as they were pledg'd, she has then a right to be inform'd

inform'd of my intentions; if not, the secret dwells with me."

Claypole foresaw that here the conference must end. "That secret," he replied, "may easily be guessed at."—Then added in conclusion—"I shall make true report of what you tell me to my niece."

CHAPTER IV.

The Decree of the Judge without Conscience is reversed.

MR. Claypole had risen from his seat, and was upon the point of departing, when Ezekiel bolted into the room with unaccustomed alacrity, and running up to our young hero, threw his arms about his neck: curiosity, or some deeper motive, fixed the reverend visitor to the spot, and the animated enthusiast, who probably did not know there was a third person present, proceeded to cry out in an ecstatic tone—"Henry! my son! my child! my glorious generous boy! may Heaven shower down its blessings on your head! Come to my heart, for it runs over with affection for you. No, no, I cannot part from you; I never will; I will work for you, pray for you, nay, by the Lord, I will fight for you."—Having, whilst he uttered these last words, quitted his embrace, to put himself in a martial attitude, correspondent with the sentiment, he cast his eyes upon the person of the looker-on—"Under favour, reverend Sir," he said, "I protest I did not advert to your person being present: Mr. Claypole, or I am mistaken."

"The same," cried Claypole, "at your service."

"Not so, worthy Sir," rejoined Ezekiel, "you owe no human master; and I hail the happy chance

chance that brings you hither to partake of that delight, that christian joy and exultation, which your heart must feel, as preacher of the word of truth and charity, to see this youth, a stripling in the race that is set before us, outstep all competitors, and seize the glorious goal of victory over Mammon, and all his sordid, lucre-loving filthy, worshippers, at an age green in experience, grey, thank Heaven, in virtue, charity and every christian grace! Yes, reverend Sir, you must surely rejoice and be glad, inasmuch as our friend Henry now appertaineth to your flock; and report speaks loudly of you as of a faithful pastor in Christ, and I your poor fellow servant and follower at due distance, venerate you therefore. How then must your pious bosom glow to see that this our friend has sacrific'd a noble fortune to his love of justice, rejected treasures pour'd into his lap; treasures that might have tempted hermits from their cells, to save the sinner's soul, and clear his conscience for the great account, 'There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches,' saith the wise man. Behold! this good deed hath our young man done; and verily, he shall have great riches in the true sense of the proverb; he hath not taken away the inheritance of the poor destitute; he hath not robb'd the children's children of their bread, therefore he shall have an inheritance amongst the children of light. I have this instant left the couch of the dying man; I pronounce him a true penitent; the thorns, that lurked within his pillow, thy hand, my Henry, hath drawn; his death will be easy; his spirit will expire in blessings; his child is now his heir; the will is clos'd, and he longs to clasp him in his arms: the poor deluded wench, whom his base arts seduc'd, the widow's only child, will now be comforted, and when I've set before her

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her eye's the loathsomeness of sin in proper colours, I have good hope she'll tread the paths of purity hereafter; at least she shall not want for exhortations on my part; the daughter of our friendly widow May shall not be lost for lack of spiritual assistance and advice."

"How's this?" exclaimed Claypole, turning himself towards Henry, "Is Susan May the mother of a son by Blachford? and has the daughter of my friend Sir Roger Manstock been harbouring a strumpet in her service?"

"A strumpet do you call her?" cried Ezekiel. "Reverend Sir, I pray you be advised more truly; I do pronounce Susan May to be no strumpet, albeit the mother of this babe; for virtue undermin'd by artifice, or violated by force, is virtue not the less, and charity will give it its true name, with pity and compassion super-added. Your Master, reverend Sir, and mine, condemn'd not her that was taken even in adultery itself; shall we, forgetting his divine benevolence, condemn this damsel, sacrific'd by treachery, divested of reason by the operation of seducing and intoxicating potions, and then thrown insensible and unresisting on the impure couch of the defiler? Forbid it, charity! that you, or I, or any one of christian training, should call that guiltless sufferer a strumpet."

Claypole had heard enough; confounded, vexed, indignant; he now started from his seat, and snatching up his hat, whispered a few words to Henry: and then darting an angry look at honest Daw, hastily departed.

CHAPTER V.

Our Hero is admitted to an unexpected conference.

WHILST this was passing in the cottage, Captain Crowbery, after his rencontre with Henry, had returned to the castle, and in a conversation with his cousin the Viscount had done justice to the spirited behaviour of his antagonist, relating the grounds of their quarrel, the words that had passed in their meeting, and all the particulars consequential of it. Now it so happened, that the peer was conscious of being as deep in the plot of the press-gang as his kinsman, but he was not conscious of the same courage to face the resentment of our hero: the story, therefore, caused certain perturbations in his Lordship's mind not altogether agreeable, and he became extremely anxious to be assured that the affair was made up so completely, that no after-reckonings could be started, which he himself might be called upon to account for. Nothing humbles some people's pride so much as fear; the pride of Lord Crowbery hardly stooped to any other corrector. On the present occasion, it was thoroughly brought down by more fears than one, for the Captain had brought the news of Henry's being heir to Blachford, which not only cut up his Lordship's interested expectations from that quarter, but brought to his recollection certain papers and correspondences in the possession of the said testator, which would naturally fall into the hands of his executor, and disclose matters very inconvenient to his Lordship to have revealed. How to get these out of Henry's reach was now the question; he had called

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led frequently at the sick man's door for that purpose, but had never been admitted; and to these documents, if they were yet in existence, not only his reputation, but what was dearer to him still, his personal safety, was committed.

It was now that he regretted his former haughty treatment of our hero; he felt himself the dupe of Blachford, and perceived that he had practised upon his jealousy with no other view but to serve his own revengeful purposes, and engage him as a party in his plots against an innocent man. Nay, it is to be presumed, he was not quite proof against the many instances of Henry's honourable conduct; and the impression Captain Crowbery had now received of our hero's behaviour was such, as had made a total change in his sentiments, and that gentleman was now become as zealous an advocate and admirer, as before he was an enemy and a persecutor of Henry. Lord Crowbery, who had motives not quite so honourable, but not less cogent, for making his peace with our hero, lent a willing ear to the commendations that his cousin bestowed upon him, and declared himself so fully convinced that he had been betrayed by Blachford into groundless jealousies and suspicions, that he proposed inviting him to his house, and indulging him with a visit to his benefactress upon the eve of her departure, as a token of his entire reconciliation, and to do away, by this mark of his confidence, all those reports that had been circulated against the reputation of his Lady.

This proposal being heartily seconded by the Captain, Lord Crowbery immediately repaired to the chamber of his Lady, and approaching her with a mild and gracious look, he began by assuring her that he had entirely and for ever dismissed every relic of unkindness and suspicion from his mind;

that he was sensible he had been led into error, and alarmed without reason as to her partiality for Henry; that he saw it now not only in the most innocent but most amiable light, and he wished her to persist in the protection of one so well deserving. Lest she should doubt the sincerity of his conversion to an opinion so directly opposite to what he had lately held, he repeated, in short, the substance of the conversation he had just had with his kinsman, and concluded by saying, that as he was persuaded she must wish to see Henry, and to take leave of him before her departure, he proposed, with her consent, to send for him to his house, where she herself should be a witness of the reception he would give him.

Lady Crowbery heard this proposal with a sensation of pleasure not entirely clear from suspicion of its sincerity, yet as she could readily comprehend some reasons that her Lord might have for altering his tone at least, if not his temper, she was not backward to embrace it with as good a grace as she was capable of assuming. Few favours could be less expected than that of her being permitted to visit Manstock house; this was an indulgence far beyond all hope or conjecture, yet as she owed the first to the influence of Mr. L——, she might also be indebted to him, jointly with Captain Crowbery, for this further instance of a revolution, either real or affected, in the conduct and opinions of her Lord: and now the Captain with much alacrity undertook to be the bearer of a very civil invitation to our hero on the part of the Viscount, requesting him forthwith to repair to the Castle, where Lady Crowbery was expecting his arrival.

He obeyed the summons, and being prepared for a kind reception by the Captain, who accompanied

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panied him from the cottage, he was ushered without delay to the chamber of his mother, where my Lord was waiting, and with as much address as he was master of, welcomed him to his house, saying, that he hoped all former misunderstandings would be forgotten, and that they might be good friends and neighbours in all future time. To this Henry made a proper reply in the same stile of civility, and approached towards Lady Crowbery, to pay her his respects silently and cautiously, with a tender look of pity and attention. Her languid but still lovely countenance cut him to the heart; the change her frame and features had undergone since last he saw her was too visible. Turning from a spectacle so affecting, he said,—“It is very kind in you, my Lord, to allow me to pay this melancholy duty to my benefactress; ’tis generous to have this consideration for one, who, with all the purest sentiments of gratitude to the only friend he has in life, is now at length permitted to approach her: I humbly thank you for this great indulgence.”

His voice could execute no more—not a word was attempted by the mother.—“I’ll leave you to yourselves,” said Lord Crowbery, “and give orders that you shall not be disturbed; your time and privacy shall be your own.”

The door was shut; his step was heard upon the stairs; nature was freed from all restraint; Henry dropped on his knee, and bathed his mother’s hand with tears.—“My son, my son!” was all that she could utter. To attempt the recapitulation of this tender dialogue would be in vain, for words can ill describe a scene like this; and he must be an actor rather than author, that can give life to representatives of son and mother in such touching situations. The matter, not the manner, lies within my powers. Henry imparted to her his plan of

meeting her at Lisbon, by the favour of Captain Cary, now upon the point of sailing.—“Did she approve of his so doing?”—She most highly approved of it, and warmly recommended it, for reasons interesting to him, no less than to herself: she had received a verbal intimation, through a confidential channel, from his father, Mr. Delapoor, avowing himself the person who had sent her the ring as a token of his affectionate remembrance of her, and faithful adherence to his first vows, through many years of absence, and a long course of various adventures; that he still considered himself as her husband in heart; and hearing with the deepest concern that her case was such as made it necessary for her to resort to Lisbon, he had determined to hasten thither himself, in the hope that he might be permitted there to devote his honourable attentions to her service, and approve himself still gratefully impressed with that pure but ardent attachment, which no absence had been able to abate, and which to the last hour of life he should unalterably retain.

This intelligence was in all respects most satisfactory to Henry, who had now a certainty of his father being living, and a fair prospect of retrieving his late disappointment, by a speedy meeting. We shall not be minute in detailing all that was said by the respective parties upon this interesting topic, nor shall we be more particular in stating what passed between them on the subject of Blachford's will; it may suffice to say, that Henry's disinterested renunciation of the bequest, in favour of a natural heir, met with full approbation and applause from his generous mother, who concluded her remarks upon the transaction, by declaring, that from the first moment she had heard of it, she had never cordially reconciled herself to the circumstance of her son's being made heir to a fortune

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tune so amassed and so devised, which not only robbed him of the credit of forgiving a repentant enemy, freely and unconditionally, but which would probably involve him in trouble and perplexity, and set him forth to the world under a suspicion of foul dealing, which she could not bear to have his character exposed to, and be made a topic for detraction, for the mere worldly advantages of stepping into a man's fortune, who bore no other relation or alliance to him, than as one, who having been his enemy and intentional assassin, had by a death-bed repentance been converted to a friend and unexpected benefactor. It was therefore with the most heartfelt satisfaction she saw him endowed with spirit to judge and act so consonantly to her feelings, without any advice on her part, or any knowledge on his of the extent of her intentions towards him, which, she would now inform him, were no less than to bequeath him the whole and entire estate of her father, which by will she was invested with; a property so ample, that the superfluous bequest of Mr. Blachford was no longer worth a thought.

This led her to speak of Sir Roger, in whose hands she had lodged her will; and after enquiring of her son how he had passed his time at Manstock House, with a view to discover what the state of his heart was towards the fair Isabella, turning to him with a look of maternal affection, she said—"Ah! my beloved Henry, wou'd you know the first and warmest wish of your fond mother's heart, it is that you may gain an interest with that lovely girl, so form'd to make you happy: I know her to be so devoted to her father, as to have profess'd certain resolutions, which I hold to be romantic; and I can well believe it must be a lover of no common qualities, that can induce her

her to forego them; but as you cannot in your present unacknowledg'd character hope to engage the consent of my uncle, nor honourably make known your real pretensions to Isabella herself, I have that perfect trust in her honour, that I am ready to confide to her alone the secret of your being my son, if you can give me hope there is that disposition in her, which, upon this discovery, might be improv'd to your advantage: tell me therefore with sincerity how you stand in her good graces, and to-morrow, when she and I are alone at Manstock, I will be your advocate, and throw myself upon her candour for your sake."

"Heaven blefs you for your goodness!" cried Henry; "how can I ever thank you as I ought? What can I say or do, or undertake for your sake, that may but in the least degree demonstrate to you my gratitude for all your bounties? Let me attempt some act of duty, which no son has ever yet aspir'd to! let me forbear to think of love and Isabella, whilst your life, so dear to me above all earthly blessings, hangs in this dangerous suspence. I will not suffer any other thought to lodge within my heart: Oh! my beloved honour'd mother, let me devote myself to you alone."

Here he again cast himself at her feet, whilst she threw her arms about his neck and pressed him to her bosom;—"My son! my soul!" she cried, "this transport of affection is a cordial to your sick mother, that gives her a new life: your love revives me, my dear child, and seems to animate my languid frame with health and strength. Is it not fit that I should live for him that gives me life? And now, my son, without more questioning, I have found you out; your heart is in my sight; I see the lovely Isabella has possession of it. How shou'd it be otherwise? How should such beauty, modesty, good sense, and sweetness fail to gain the affections

affections of a soul congenial to her own? You love her, Henry, and as it is not in your nature to prevaricate, it is not in your nature to deny it."

At this moment Zachary Cawdle entered the apartment, bearing in his hand a phial, which, although its contents were of a restorative quality, we doubt if his patient was not more annoyed by his interruption, than profited by his cordial.

CHAPTER VI.

The Conference is interrupted, resumed, and concluded.

THOUGH Zachary was informed that Henry was with his patient, and knew, without being informed, that the minutes of their privacy were extremely precious, yet as he was fixt in the opinion that all things ought to give way to medicine and method, he did not permit any scruples to stop him, as soon as ever the clock gave notice that the four hours draught was in turn to be repeated. In this instance however, the feelings of the son did not entirely correspond with those of the mother, and the interruption that gave pain to her, was to him a sensible relief, for in this interval of time he had so far recollected himself, as to be prepared against the dilemma, to which he was now driven with respect to Isabella. The first caution, that occurred to his thoughts, was to divert Lady Crowsley from her proposal of divulging the secret of his birth to Miss Manstock, or taking any measures with that young lady for interesting her in his favour, esteeming it unfair that any attempt should be made on her affections on his behalf, circumstanced as he was with respect to Fanny Claypole: the next thing that struck him, was

was the propriety of holding back from his mother the vexatious embarrassment he was involved in with the lady last mentioned, at least till the result of her uncle's report, and her resolutions thereupon, were made known to him. From the language lately held by Mr. Claypole he still nourished a faint hope that it was possible he might be set loose from his unfortunate engagement, an emancipation that he would have thought cheaply purchased by the sacrifice of Blachford's legacy; and in this interim, why was he to be the first to publish an affair not over delicate in the recital, and certainly not very reputable to the lady in question? If he was dismissed, the least he could do was to keep his own secret; if not, it became his interest to uphold her reputation by all the means in his power; he therefore prudently determined not to open himself on this painful and afflicting subject.

No sooner had the punctual man of medicine left them at liberty to resume their conversation, than Henry, taking up the subject where Lady Crowbery had left it, addressed himself to her as follows:—"I shou'd be asham'd of prevarication in your presence, more especially as you declare that my heart is in your sight, which that it may deserve to be, both now and for ever, it behoves me to keep it clear from dissimulation and hypocrisy: I am flatter'd therefore, when you say that you discern in it affection and esteem for the loveliest and most amiable of her sex, as I must own you wou'd have reason to turn away your eyes with loathing and aversion had you found it unempassion'd by her charms or insensible to her perfections. Blest indeed must be the man who cou'd boast of the possession of a heart like her's, and whose pretensions might be sanction'd by her father's free consent; but as I hold myself excluded from all chance of such a blessing, and am persuaded

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suaded that my destiny is otherwise directed, I do most earnestly implore my kind and generous mother, not only not to let the secret of my birth, and the too liberal disposition of her fortune, pass her lips, but also to refrain from moving the soft heart of Isabella in my favour: let that sweet nature be at peace, nor stir her any farther to a thought of me, than as of one who knows himself unworthy her regards, and hopelessly admires and honours her. If I had ever any place in her affections, let it wear out by absence; let me, like her, devote myself to filial duty, and then, although our objects are alike, our destinations will be widely apart: Lisbon and Manstock House will make a chasm between us, over which I hope no sigh of her's will ever pass. That you believe me worthy such a blessing is an honour above all merit; that you would risque your secret, and engage yourself to plead for me to Isabella, is a mark of your benevolence, for which I am ever bound to you; but I most solemnly implore you for the present to withhold it."

"Well, my dear Henry," the tender mother replied, "I'll not go counter to your wishes, but give you credit for the principle on which you act, though I confess you puzzle and surprize me: reasons I must suppose you have, more than you think it needful to display; and as I have firm reliance on your rectitude of thought and conduct, I will not embarrass you with any questions on this point. Are we to meet at Manstock House?"

"With your permission, no: I look to join the ship to-morrow."

"I hope you have no farther differences to adjust with Captain Crowbery."

"None," replied Henry; "absolutely none, upon my honour; I am in perfect reconciliation with that gentleman, and hold myself for ever

bound to testify to his most honourable and manly behaviour in an affair, where I was much too warm."

"Have you any thing in commission for me to say to my uncle?"

"Nothing, but my most grateful thanks for all his goodness."

"And what to Isabella?"

"Oh! my dear Madam," exclaimed Henry, "why that question? Let me conceive in silence, but not vent those wishes even in a whisper: ask me not what to Isabella: my whole soul is her's, yet wou'd my tongue be the veriest traitor to the cause of honour and humanity, were it to tell her how I doat upon her. By the love you bear me, I conjure you do not let her know the insolent confession, which your sudden question has drawn from me: 'twill ruin me for ever in her thoughts, if she shou'd hear that I presume so much as but to name her. though it were in my prayers."

"What is this you tell me?" she cried. "Now, Henry, now I own you rouse my curiosity to know what thought so dreadful harbours in your heart. What have you done to ruin yourself with Isabella? Confess, for the alarm is terrible; surely, my son, surely your passion has not master'd your respect."

"Just Heaven renounce me, if in thought I could offend against such purity! No, Madam," he cried, "no, your son is not a savage; and if I were, her virtue wou'd restrain and awe the wildest and the worst of natures."

"What then," said she, "reduces you to hold this language? 'Tis not mere respect that dictates to you words like those you utter'd; the most humble suppliant, nay, Henry, the most abject self-convicted offender wou'd not so address himself to any human being."

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"What have I said?" resumed he: "Oh! that I could recal my words; but you will not release them. What can I say? Must I confess to you I have offended Isabella past redemption? Shock'd her chaste eyes, revolted her pure nature; not indeed in her own person; that were to sin as it were against Heaven; but in the person of another, far different, alas! from her. There let me stop; press me no farther I conjure you; let her divulge the rest; and if she does, defend me not, dear mother, but tell her I am conscience-smitten, self-condemn'd, and punish'd more than ever wretch was punish'd, in the loss of her esteem."

"If I did not persuade myself," she replied, "that you are incapable of any thing that's grossly wrong, I should be truly wretched; but as I am firm in that persuasion, and satisfied by your assurance that the offence does not personally affect my cousin Isabella, I will not believe that you need absolutely to despair of pardon: I guess it is some giddy boyish scrape, which you have fallen into, and I can also guess with whom; but lovers use strong language when they speak of their quarrels, and I can allow a great deal for your extraordinary sensibility; a frown, a pout, a pettish word can make strange havoc with a heart feeling and fond as your's; but Isabella will forgive you; take my word for it, Henry, I shall find a soft moment to make your peace, and send you a full pardon, upon proper submission and atonement."

Henry had by this time collected his thoughts sufficiently to see the danger into which he had been surprised, and how far he had outstept discretion in this unguarded declaration of his passion; he was therefore eager to avail himself of the opening, which his mother's temperate answer gave him, for drawing back in time to save himself, without committing Fanny Claypole; and though

it was pretty clear that Lady Crowbery's suspicion pointed at Susan May, yet as she was not directly named, and time would quickly serve for him to clear her character, he acquiesced in the deception, and was silent.

It was now time to put an end to their conference; but before this took place, he was fain to compound for a release from all further enquiries, by promising to remain where he was during the whole of the next day, when he was to hold himself amenable to any summons that his mother, after her arrival at Manstock House, might think fit to send him. This compromise being acceded to on his part, and sealed with a maternal embrace on that of Lady Crowbery, they tenderly took leave of each other, and parted.

CHAPTER VII.

The Penitent, on his Death-bed, atones to Justice.

WHEN Henry arrived at the cottage, he found the nurse with Susan May's child waiting his return: in a few minutes after, the chaise with the mother herself drove to the door. Ezekiel Daw was at this time in attendance upon his penitent. Henry put the nurse and child into the inner chamber, and no third person being present at his meeting with Susan, he proceeded without interruption to explain to her the purposes for which he had called her from Manstock House, and in speaking of her connection with Blachford, treated her feelings with such delicacy (assuring her, that by the confession of her seducer she would stand acquitted to all that heard the story) that his consideration for her character, no less than the very extraordinary sacrifice he had made to her interest,

interest, so affected her, as to leave her no other powers of expressing her gratitude, except what her tears, which flowed in plenty, could supply.

"Wonder not," he cried, "at what I have done, as if it was a case uncommon for a man to be just and honest. What have I to do with Blachford and his money? If he had bequeath'd it to me, and died before I had made this discovery of the claim you have upon him, I shou'd have held myself obliged in conscience to make over what he left me to your son and you. Now I do not wish to make a parade of my disinterestedness, and shou'd hold it rather as an affront to be complimented for an act of justice, regarding it as a hint, that they suspected me to be a knave; I therefore think myself very happy to have found your secret out in time, to make that an act of atonement on his part, which, had it devolv'd upon me, wou'd have put me to the trouble of a conveyance, and annoy'd me very probably with a great deal of that popularity and applause, which some people are flatter'd with, but which I have no taste for."

When Henry, by this and other representations like this, perceived that he had in some degree quieted the agitation of Susan's spirits, he put her in mind to make ready for an interview with the father of her child, and having stept into the inner room, he presented to her sight the child itself, giving it into her arms, and declaring it to be his ward, and the infant heir of Blachford. The beauty of the child, the ecstasy of the mother, the astonishment of the nurse, and the benevolence depicted in the features of our blooming hero, composed a group of characters not totally unworthy the historic pencil of *the painter of the passions*.

The generous heart of Henry, in the contemplation

plation of this scene, enjoyed a more luxurious banquet than the wealth of Blachford could have purchased. True gratitude, like deep-felt woe, is not to be discharged by words; Susan was mute, and once, if Henry had not stopt her, she was falling at his feet.—“What are you about to do?” he cried, “Remember, you once tender’d me your all; I’m only paying you with what is not my own.”—And now bidding her take heart and follow him, he proceeded with her, the infant, and the nurse, to the sick man’s house: they were admitted without delay; Blachford was impatiently expecting them, and Ezekiel Daw was in the chamber with him. Henry took the child in his arms, and advancing to the couch, presented it to its father—“I have brought,” he cried, “two comforters to visit you; the one, in the person of this smiling cherub, seems the very emblem of peace; the other, (pointing to Susan as he spoke) by your justice reinstated in her innocence, and indemnified for her injuries, will heal those inward pains that agonize us more than all our fleshly wounds: accept them, cherish them, embrace them; they will brighten every moment of your life, and the last moment more than all; in this life, they will be the witnesses and recorders of your penitence, in the life to come your advocates and intercessors at the throne of mercy.”—Blachford took the child in his arms, and lifting up his eyes, exclaimed—“The Lord of mercy grant their intercessions may avail!”—“Amen!” echoed the pious Ezekiel, from a corner of the room, to which he had retreated, and where, dropping on his knees, he silently put up a fervent and (let us hope) not ineffectual prayer.

Blachford, whose mind was now prepared for death, and felt the awful coming on, was instant in his wishes to complete the last remaining task he

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he had to do on earth, whilst yet his senses were entire. The lawyer was in waiting, and Zachary, with his sub-surgeon Kinloch, coming in most opportunely at the instant, all things seemed to favour the important work, and nothing now was wanting but the concluding forms to make it perfect. Blachford was raised upon his couch to sign and seal; the materials were set before him, the witnesses stood round him, when turning his eyes on Zachary first, and next on Kinloch, he said,—“ I call upon you, gentlemen, to attest upon the faith of honest men, and able judges of my situation, that I am now in mental faculties sound and competent to execute this deed, declaring it my will and testament, by which I make this infant, born of Susan May here present, and my son, of her begotten out of wedlock, sole heir of all my property, save what is herein given and bequeathed to her, the mother, by annuity charged on the estate; also one small acknowledgment of five hundred pounds to this my executor, and guardian of my son, Henry Fitzhenry, so called, at whose solicitation, voluntarily and generously made, I have revoked the former disposition of my affairs in his behalf. A most disinterested and conscientious act it was, and I do pray him to accept this small bequest in token of my love and his forgiveness, conscious as I am of his unequalled worth and deeply penitent for all that I have said, or done, or meditated in his wrong: and further, I enjoin and strictly charge the mother of my child to be observant of his counsel and advice, and firmly to impress upon the mind of this her infant, as he grows to years of reason and reflexion, what he owes to this his benefactor by whose special bounty he is now endow'd with affluence, that else it never cou'd have been his fortune to enjoy.”

Having

Having said this, and the appeal he had made to Zachary and his attendant being answered with assurances of their entire conviction of his being in perfect possession of his senses (a point indeed which no one of his hearers could be deceived in) he signed and sealed his will, and, after it was witnessed, delivered it to Henry. Exhausted by these efforts, he began so evidently to droop, that Doctor Cawdle, in virtue of his medical authority dismissed the whole company. The mother, child and nurse were by Blachford's desire accommodated with beds in his house; Henry contented himself with his quarters at the cottage; but having hitherto abstained from asking any questions about a matter that was nearest to his heart, and the business to which he had devoted his first attention being so happily concluded, he became impatient for a few minutes in private with his friend Susan. Of this wished-for opportunity he was soon put in possession; for Ezekiel, on whose mind these events had made a powerful impression, had walked home in deep meditation, without saying a word to any body; whereupon Susan, having given her boy in charge to the nurse, retired with Henry into Blachford's parlour. It was the very room where the one party had been arraigned for his life, and the other despoiled of her innocence. What mighty revolutions can a few short days effect! the offender at the point of death, the sufferers restored to their character, and the property of the guilty, including the very scene of his criminality, actually made over as an atonement to the guiltless.

Henry, to prevent interruption, made fast the door, and taking Susan by the hand, led her to a chair: she was still trembling with agitation; tremours of another sort would have possessed her, had Henry so done a while ago: she now looked

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up to him with awful admiration; love, tempered with respect, gave that chaste expression to her eyes, which on some past occasions had exhibited affections not so pure: passions as irresistible as that which now had command of her more than once had impelled her to embrace him wantonly in her arms; pure gratitude, unmixed with any grosser impulse, now threw her, bathed in tears, upon his neck: he pressed her tenderly to his bosom, spoke of the kindnesses she had so often shewn him, and asserted obligations received on his part, prior and superior to these conferred on her; when having soothed her in this generous manner for some minutes—"Now tell me, I conjure you," "he cried, and tell me truly, am I totally undone in the opinion of your lovely mistress?"—"Alas!" she replied, "what can I tell you, my dear friend and benefactor? certain it is, that gentle heart is wounded through and through; but whether more by displeasure than by sorrow I am yet to learn. She is very silent on the subject, and it is not from her lips that the story has escap'd; it is Miss Claypole herself and her politic uncle (pardon me, if I cannot speak of them with the respect that becomes me) who have made public what my young lady's delicacy never would have spoken of, and what their's, one should have thought, would have been interested to conceal. But when Miss thought fit to blazon her own shame by bouncing out of the house, and betaking herself to the parsonage, as if she had been flying from her persecutors, the whole family were up in arms, as I may say, and every mouth was open'd to cry shame upon her. 'Tis not to be told with what a confidence she has carried it off venting herself against my meek young lady in a manner that I am sure you wou'd detest her for. Ah! my beloved friend, where were your eyes,
your

your heart, your understanding, during that fatal gallery-adventure? I can no otherwise account for it, than by supposing you was not in your senses at the moment; knowing how temperate you are, and unaccustom'd to excess, I must impute it to the effects of the wine you drank upon the election meeting, and so I told my lady."—"You told her true," said Henry; "but what then? One beastiality cannot excuse another."

"Pardon me," rejoined Susan, "her candour found a motive for excusing it; but no candour can justify the sacrifice you are making of your happiness, if the report be true, which that young madam circulates, that you are pledg'd to her for marriage. Heaven forbid that I shou'd see that day! Surely, surely you have not madly made that promise; why, 'tis ruin, misery, disgrace inevitable! Stop me, if I proceed too far; I shou'd be sorry to offend you; but indeed, my dear Sir, every body knows, and every body says, without scruple, what Miss Claypole is."

"What is she? I am not offended—speak."

"What is she! A coquette, a flirt, a wanton: one that will go great lengths, if not all; but that perhaps you can best tell: be that however as it may, you are not the only favour'd lover; others, and not a few, have been as kindly treated as yourself: her uncle knows that well enough, and is indeed a generous man to part with what he's tir'd of, and knows to be a property that hangs upon his hands, and keeps him in alarm for every day that passes till he is rid of her. Believe me, my dear Sir, that uncle is a deep one; not a servant in the family but laments the influence he has over their good master; and though Miss Manstock is too delicate to speak out, I can discover to a certainty that she is not mistaken in his character; no, nor my Lady Crowbery, neither, though

thought it is given out in the house that he is to succeed to your Mr. Ratcliffe's living."

"Indeed!" cried Henry, "is that said? 'Tis time for me to counteract him in those hopes. Claypole succeed my friend! my honour'd friend! Impossible! that shall never take place."—Observing Susan look at him with surprise, he recollected himself, and in an humble tone added,—“At least if I have any interest with the lady patroness.”—Susan resumed her discourse—“And now” aid she, “Miss Claypole gives it out that she was frightened by the thunder-storm, and fainted in your arms: if it were so, what then? I hope you are not bound to marry the first lady that faints in your arms: but who believes that she was frightened? Nobody; she is not of the sort to be so easily frightened; you must have known, if you had been yourself, that it was all put on to win you to her ways. The servants all declare that she was fit to eat you up, as they describe it; every one saw that, and knew what she was driving at: she dogged you to the gallery, and there the lucky storm helped forward her determined scheme to take you in the very cue for mischief, heated with wine, half tipsy, and less than half yourself. Oh, Henry, Henry! (suffer me this once to address you thus familiarly) can I not speak in proof of your forbearance, of your self-command? Have I not a right to say, though saying it, I ought to blush at the recollection, that I have found you master of yourself, when I have lost all government of reason in the excess of my love to you? How often and how impetuously has passion hurried me into your arms, although no lucky storm was there commodiously to favour my fond wishes? yet you have withstood all trials; but perhaps nature has given her charms and powers to tempt, which I am not possessed of; but this is true, as truth itself can witness, that no concessions on my part, no
promise

promise on your's, shou'd have prevailed with me, even when your fortune was at the lowest ebb, to have trepanned you into marriage, conscious as I was that I had not that maiden purity to give, which you had so much right to expect. You know, full well you know, dearest and best of friends, there was a time, when in our sports and frolics by the way, as we returned from making our purchases, that when you glanced at marriage, I drew back at once, and oftentimes I've been upon the point of telling you this tale of my seduction, had you not always seized those dangerous moments to cut short our conversation, and preserve my virtue and your own: and now, what mighty obligation can you have to this seducing wanton, though we'll suppose you have gone beyond that limit where discretion shou'd have stopp'd? Grant that you have; whose virtue suffer'd most by the surprise? your's or the lady's? Because she throws away her reputation, must you marry her?"

"Before I answer to that question," replied Henry, "let me clear up one error. If Miss Claypole was inviolate before our meeting in that odious gallery, I promise you she left it as she entered it for me: her favours did not go the length you hint at. The vision of an angel fear'd me from her embrace; the frown of purity itself subdued my guilty passions, and I fled from her allurements: but as I hold it due from every man of honour to make atonement for even the slightest stain he casts upon the fame of a woman of character, I tender'd her the only reparation in my power; my hand, if that could heal the injury. She took my hand, alas! and broke my heart."

"Thank Heaven!" cried Susan, "you have taken one weight from my mind; the main point was not carried; she has felt one disappointment, and I'll engage it was a cutting one. Now I can

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understand the reason for her shifting to the vicarage; 'tis all a trap to catch you, and make sure of you; she thinks your honour then would seal the bargain, and surrender you for life the dupe of her contrivances; but go not near her, I conjure you, let not that uncle, who is her setter, draw you in to visit her alone; you are ruined if you do. As for a word dropt in an unguarded moment, when you was not in clear possession of your reason, that I persuade myself you will not think yourself obliged to abide by, nor sacrifice the happiness of your whole life for a romantic punctilio."

Henry shook his head: she proceeded—"Now I begin to have more than a dawn of hope. Oh! let me once come to the ear of my dear young lady, and I'll pledge myself that all will be set straight. She loves you at her heart; I know she does; nay, she has owned it to me in so many words. Next as she was, and mortified to the very soul at your proceeding, still, when she surprised me reading your kind note on the morning of your leaving us, and saw the generous gift that it enclosed, understanding it was a farewell token to my mother before you left us and went out to sea, the colour fled her cheeks, her eyes quivered in their lids, and she dropt, sweet afflicted soul, like a blossom from the stalk, lifeless into my arms. If this is not the very test of love, what is it? Ah! my dear, dear friend, do but once shake off this flirting damsel, and Miss Manstock is your own."

"And what can be so cutting as that thought?" said Henry. "What can afflict me deeper than to reflect I had a chance of happiness, and threw it wantonly away?"

"Who says that it is thrown away," replied Susan? "I have conviction to the contrary."—(Here she drew a letter from her pocket.) "Does this appear like anger?" she demanded.—"Here is a note

note penned with her own fair hand; it is entrusted to me on this condition, only to be delivered to you, if you are disengaged from Fanny Claypole."—"Stop then," cried Henry, "on these terms I must not take it, blessed as I should be."—"What am I to infer from this?" said she.—"That I will not permit you to break through conditions, which Miss Manstock has imposed."—"But what if I am privy to the contents?"—"Let them be sacred," he rejoined, "breathe not a syllable, however delightful to my ears: I am not disengaged from Miss Claypole, and therefore must not violate the seal, nor secretly purloin the purport of that letter, entrusted to you under those restrictions: remember, Susan, the same principle, which led me to decline the bequest of Mr. Blachford, now obliges me to deny myself the transport which the perusal of that angel's favour would bestow:—What do I hear?" cried Susan.—"Are you then——?"—"Undone!" said Henry, and departed.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Incident of the Tragic Cast.

IF there is not a secret joy in being strictly faithful to the rigid laws of honour, our hero must have been at this moment of all men most miserable: for he might well presume that Isabella's letter was a kind one; and what had this world to give him comparable to a testimony of her kindness? Nothing but the consciousness of acting right. Educated in the most correct adherence to truth and rectitude, he had no sophistry to palliate the slightest deviation from them, and shuddered at deceit however qualified. Stung to the quick by his remorse for having been a party in the cause, if

not

not the cause itself, of Fanny Claypole's misbehaviour, he took her shame upon himself; and vexed at the recollection of his own weak facility in falling in with her advances, he determined to meet the consequences he had drawn upon himself, unless rescued either by her voluntary release, or some such unequivocal proofs of her misconduct as might justify him in renouncing the connection. Upon his return to the cottage, he found Ezekiel in the act of consoling himself with his afternoon's pipe, whilst his bible lay open on the table before him. The pious creature was in profound meditation upon the book of Proverbs, on which he was founding an admonitory discourse for the edification of Susan May, whom, though he had exculpated in the face of her reverend accuser, yet it must be owned to have been a slight stretch upon the truth of his opinion, extorted from him in his zeal for saying the best of a friend, and for opposing any sentiment of Claypole, who was just then in no high favour with him, or, more properly speaking, in sovereign contempt. Occupied in this manner, he took so little notice of Henry, on his coming into the room, that it might be doubted if he saw him; and Henry, on his part, had his thoughts too much employed to solicit his attention.

A messenger now rode up to the door, and being accosted by Henry, put a letter into his hands, the contents of which were as follows:—

“ My uncle, who sees most things in a false
“ light, thinks you have done very unwisely in de-
“ clining Blachford's fortune; but money is his god,
“ and love is mine. I build my happiness upon bet-
“ ter things than riches, and admire your spirit;
“ though I must own it would not have been amiss
“ had you taken the fellow's dirty pelf, rather than
“ it

" it should fall into the hands of those low crea-
 " tures, who are in the way now to profit by it.
 " I should like to live at Crowbery, and have parti-
 " cular reasons for wishing you to reserve that place
 " at least to yourself, whatever becomes of the
 " rest of the property. I have quitted the old man-
 " sion and its formal inhabitants, and am now en-
 " tirely alone in my uncle's house; if you have any
 " pity for a solitary damsel, you will come to me
 " without delay: here are no spirits to haunt us,
 " nor any galleries in which they walk by night.
 " My house, my heart, my arms are open to re-
 " ceive you. What can my teasing uncle mean
 " by telling me you are going out of England with-
 " out seeing me? that I am sure is impossible; that
 " I will not believe: the man of my choice will ne-
 " ver treat me so; he has too much honour, too
 " much love, too much pity for a fond doating heart,
 " which such neglect would break. I shall look
 " for you this night, this happy night; if not with
 " the first dawn of day at farthest; longer than
 " till then I cannot live without you; think what
 " I am suffering till I see you; lost to all the world
 " but you, I have nothing to regret so you are
 " faithful, and delay not to bless

" Your fond expecting

" FRANCES CLAYPOLE."

This was a puzzling dilemma; Henry had pro-
 mised his mother to obey her summons if she called
 him to her at Manstock-house; he could not there-
 fore tell Miss Claypole he was going to his ship the
 next day, neither could he with any face come to
 Manstock without visiting her; if therefore he
 was ever to see her, better he should go before
 Lady Crowbery arrived at her uncle's; and what-
 ever was to be the result of his meeting, better he
 should bring it to a definitive conclusion before he

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put himself in the way of Isabella, whose attentions to him, whilst his fate was in suspense, would embarrass him beyond measure, as not knowing how far he might be warranted in honour to receive them.

It was now about seven o'clock in an autumnal evening, the distance twelve miles, and the messenger was well mounted; he was a country fellow, and no domestic of Claypole's, Henry asked him if he would lend him his horse, and take money for hiring another at the post town two miles off. This proposal, backed with a piece of gold, was perfectly acceptable to the messenger, and Henry slept into the cottage to apprize his friend Ezekiel of his motions, and to equip himself for the saddle. A very short apology satisfied Ezekiel, whose thoughts were farther from home than Henry would be at the end of his stage; as soon therefore as he had drawn on his boots, and signified his intentions of sleeping at Dame May's, he set off at a smart rate, and within the hour arrived safely at the vicarage gate.

Great was the transport of Fanny Claypole when the object of her anxious expectation presented himself to her sight; she flung the book she was reading from her, and ran with open arms, in an ecstasy, to embrace him: wild with surprise and joy, she scarce knew what she did; with her hair loose and flowing, she seemed a perfect Sybil in her phrenzy; her dress (if dress it might be called, that totally obscured no charms which nature had endowed her with) was so invitingly disposed as shewed the effects of study and design rather than of chance or negligence; for little was concealed that could allure, yet not so much exposed as to leave nothing for imagination to supply; and a fairer field for excursions of that sort could hardly be found than in the form of Fanny.

When her flutter had in part subsided, she threw herself on the couch in a careless attitude, and observing that Henry kept himself aloof, and did not take her hint for seating himself by her, she demanded what was the matter with him? had not he recovered his alarm in the gallery? or was he waiting for another thunder storm before he could find in his heart any pity for a poor disconsolate damsel, who had no soul in the house to protect her but one old woman, who had neither eyes, ears, nor understanding? "Here we are," said she, "without one soul that will come near us for the live-long night, and what will become of me Heaven only knows, in this desolate mansion; unless you will manfully undertake to guard me, and turn into the vicar's bed for the night."

Henry smiled, and shook his head.—"Positively," resumed she, "I cannot part from you; I would as soon sleep amongst the tombs as in this dreary solitude, with no other centinel than the snoring old dame in the garret. Now I know as well as can be, by your looks, what is passing in your mind: my uncle has been preaching to you in his canting strain; but I take no account of what he thinks or what he says; I am independent of him and the whole world; and if you suppose my peace of mind can be disturbed by their talk, you are mistaken; where I have bestowed my heart I am not afraid to entrust my reputation: surely, if I ask protection of you, you will not refuse it to me."

"Certainly I will not," said Henry, "but as no danger can accrue to your person, tho' I shou'd leave you, and much to your reputation if I should remain with you, can there be a doubt what I ought to do?"—"Ridiculous!" resumed she, "this over-care of what the world may say, if you persist in it,

it, will make me doubt if I have formed a right opinion of your character. When you rejected the temptations that fortune threw before you, it was a gallant resolution; but it is no proof of spirit to decline the favours of a lady. What care I if the whole world knew that you slept in this house? The thing speaks for itself; I am mistress of my choice, and you the man I have chosen; let the world comment upon that as it likes. I have quitted society, and put myself into solitude for your sake; to whom then but to you am I to resort for protection, for consolement, nay, for justification? Where else shall I go? To my uncle? Never; I have done with him; I renounce him; I am your's and only your's. We have interchang'd our hearts: what witnesses do we need of that? Not all the parsons in the kingdom can do more, and without this their ceremonies are but mockeries; therefore let's hear no more of this affected tenderness for reputation, this hypocrisy of sentiment, which would refine away the noblest passions of the soul; let our love be without canting, our confidence without restraint; and to convince you of my sincerity in both respects, I am free to confess that it is not to any real terrors I experienced in the storm that you are indebted for the endearments I bestowed on you last night; they were the free effusions of my heart, and you may tell your conscience to be quiet on that score; for it was love, my Henry, not the elements, that threw me in your power, and the same love now courts you to the same endearments, secret and secure from all disturbers of our hours so precious. Come then, throw off that cold reserve, those distant looks that have no sympathy with mine. My eyes are honest and sincere; they speak a plain intelligible language; what ails your's, that they cannot or will not understand it without

compelling me; against the practice of my sex, to help you to a comment?"

"It is because I do understand their language, and feel their power," replied Henry, "that I avoid them. Either you think yourself less dangerous than you are, or me more firm than I pretend to be, when you beckon me to that couch."

—He was proceeding, when she stopt him, crying out—"Come, come, there is enough of this trifling; more than enough of this ridiculous, this unmanly affectation. Beware how you provoke me; I shall become desperate if I am insulted." Regardless of these menaces, Henry kept his post, and advanced not a step towards her. She kept her eyes fixed upon him, and exclaimed—"By all the loves and graces, Henry, you have the form of an Apollo! wou'd to heaven you had his fire! Well, keep your pedestal, cold lifeless image, and let me gaze upon you till my admiration warms into idolatry; 'twill gratify your pride, perhaps, to see me kneeling at your feet and worshipping you: mark, how naturally I'll act Pygmalion's part, and make love to a statue."

This said, she started from the couch, and was advancing towards him, when, preventing her as she was in the act of dropping on her knees, he cried, "Pray, do not laugh at me; I cannot stand your ridicule."

"Vittoria!" she cried, "I've made the statue move and speak. Now, since your marble majesty can bend, be pleased to sit beside me. Oh! all ye gods! it smiles, it animates, it yields, it softens with the touch; happy change! it lives! If the mere pressure of the hand does this, my arms, perhaps, may warm it into love: I'll clasp it to my heart, I'll breathe my life into its lips, and share my soul between us."

"Stop,

"Stop, Syren!" Henry exclaimed, "I'm not responsible for consequences thus urg'd upon me, nor am I bound in honour to repair them: whilst I believ'd your terrors in the storm had thrown you from your natural guard, and subjected you to weaknesses, which in a more collected moment your virtue wou'd have spurn'd at, I felt myself a party in the treason, and tender'd you the only reparation in my power ('twas all I had to offer) my unworthy self; but when you openly declare those fears were feign'd, and freely take the blame upon yourself, you quit me of the atonement; and now again, when you return to the attack, and with such exquisite allurements tempt a man, who visits you with none but honourable purposes, and combats against nature to preserve you in that purity of character, which is your sex's ornament, I think it fair to warn you that my sentiments respecting favours in anticipation differ so essentially from your's, that she, who has been mistress to me with her own consent, shall never be my wife. Beauty, and wit, and fortune, you possess more than my hopes aspire to; but permit me to observe, that, flatter'd as I am by your attachment, chastity is a virtue indispensable in the female character, and without that I should consider marriage as a certain sacrifice of happiness."

"Marriage! I laugh at it! marriage was never made for souls like mine: my love can never wait upon the lazy forms of plodding mercenary law; I scorn them all; nor are you fit for the dull drudgery of that slavish state; too young, too inexperience'd, and too choice to be made daily use of, your beauty, like a precious garment, should be reserv'd for feasts and holidays; 'twas never made for the coarse wear-and-tear of wedlock;

lock ; if you had thought of marriage you wou'd never have refused the fortune Blachford had bequeath'd you : I see it hangs upon you like a debt of honour, therefore I set you free ; I'll not exact it of you ; marry ten years hence, and marry whom you will ; of this and every other obligation honour can impose I perfectly acquit you, only for this I stipulate, I'll not be treated with contempt ; of all engagements I acquit you, but not of gratitude : Oh Henry ! have a care how you insult a woman who has broke through all reserve, and laid her heart before you : after this night you are free ; I resign you—even to Isabella."

How quick and sudden are the shifts of passion ! a word sometimes will call up a new train of thoughts, and change our resolutions in an instant. It was not virtue's self, but virtue's substitute that saved our hero ; sunk into the arms of the seducer, and resigned to the temptation, the name of Isabella roused him like a spell ; he started, sprung with horror from the couch, and cried, " You have redeem'd yourself and me : I leave you to your better recollection."—" Stop," she exclaimed, " unless you are resolv'd to be my murderer." Then, snatching up a sharp-pointed knife, with which she had been cutting open the leaves of her book, " by the eternal Truth," she cried, " I'll plunge this weapon in my heart if you desert me." Here she put herself into a menacing attitude, with a look of so much desperation, that Henry on the instant sprung forward, and seized her uplifted hand, to wrench the knife from her grasp : furious with rage, she struggled to keep hold of it ; and in the struggle, whether purposely or accidentally we pretend not to say, lodged the point of it in his left arm, below the elbow : in the same moment he got possession

session of the knife, and secured it in his pocket : she probably perceived what she had done, for she stood torpid with astonishment and terror : he rang the bell with violence ; an elderly woman came running to the call ! “ I charge you be attentive to your lady,” he cried ; “ for she is suddenly taken ill.” Then, finding that the blood was flowing apace from the wound, and would soon discover itself if he staid any longer, he hastened out of doors, and stuffing his handkerchief up his sleeve, ran as quick as he could to the house of Goody May, which luckily was near at hand.

CHAPTER IX.

Surgeon's work.

IT was well for our hero that he had not many paces to measure before he found an house to take shelter in ; for though he held his hand close pressed upon the wound, the sluice kept running apace, and his waste of blood would not have suited a much longer march. The widow was at home, and her hospitable door stood open.—“ Come, Mother,” cried Henry, as he entered, “ I have another case for you ; more work for the good Samaritan.” This said, he began to strip off his coat, which had no sooner displayed to her sight an arm covered with blood, than she gave a loud shriek, started back with horror, and fell a-trembling from head to foot. “ Courage ! my good friend,” cried the undaunted youth, with a cheering smile ; “ a good surgeon does not shrink at the sight of a wound.”—“ Wou'd to Heaven I was a good surgeon for your sake,” replied she,

“ or

“or any way more able to assist you than I am.—
 “Take heart,” he cried; “give me a chair to rest my arm upon in an horizontal posture, and fetch some lint to staunch the blood; then, I warrant, all will be well in a few minutes.” Cheered with these words, the good dame bestirred herself, and presently returned from her repository with a large pledget of lint steeped in friar’s balsam, which she laid over the wound, and bound it up with a swathe of linen in several folds. “Here’s a piece of work,” she cried; “Oh that Mr. L—— was here to dress you! but let me send post haste for Doctor Cawdle; as for myself, God help me, it pities me to the heart to see your fair flesh lach’d and hew’d in such a barbarous manner: Oh the villain that has done this! I would I had him safe in fetters of iron! some murderous wretch has stabb’d you in the dark; as sure as can be ’tis that bloody Captain you fought with in the morning; he has way-laid you on the road at night; but we’ll raise the neighbours, and have a hue-and-cry after him, please God! Is there to be no end to the malice of these accursed Crowberys?”

“There are no Crowberys in the case,” replied Henry, “nor any malice, so put yourself at peace; and say no more about it; ’tis an accident, and nothing more, a mere casualty, owing to my own aukwardness.”—“But how did it happen?” she still demanded; “I’m positive it has been the stab of a sword, or a dagger, or a knife, or some wicked weapon or other, for it has gone in the Lord knows how far.” In this manner she persisted in pressing him with enquiries, till he found no escape but by taking a little more liberty with the truth than was his custom to do, and making up as plausible a story as he could invent to account for the accident: however, she still remained incredulous,

credulous, crying out, "You are too forgiving ; indeed, my dear young sir, you are much too forgiving in all conscience ; and though to be sure humanity is very amiable, yet after all it is an act of justice to bring the guilty to punishment, and you may depend upon it they will be the death of you some time or other, tho' I hope, with God's blessing, they have miss'd their aim for this turn."

"If you will go on in a mistake, my good friend," said Henry, "you must ; so there let us leave it : I have news to tell you of your daughter, whom you seem to have forgotten." He then related to her briefly what had been passing at Blachford's, and how he had diverted that dying man's great bequest from himself to those whom he considered as having a better claim to it.

When this was disclosed to her, with the circumstance of her daughter's being a mother, (of which, strange as it may seem, she had hitherto been kept in ignorance) the variety of sensations which the discovery of facts so affecting at once excited, seemed to deprive her of speech and recollection. Henry saw the conflict of her thoughts, and perceiving that in speaking of her grand-child he had opened an affair which till then he had no notion she could be uninformed of, instantly began to explain to her, in the most consoling manner, the whole plot which Blachford and his accomplice had put in practice to obtain their wicked purposes, and entrap their innocent victim.

Here the good mother's passion broke in upon his narrative. "Monster ! villain ! she exclaimed ; "Oh ! that I had known his goings-on, that I might have brought him to the gallows as he deserved. What cou'd possess my child to screen so vile a wretch ?"—"Be content," replied Henry ; "he has met his doom at last ; and you have now the comfort to reflect, that by escaping the

punishment of the law, he has liv'd to repent, and, as far as human circumstances will admit, to atone for the crime he has perpetrated : the son, which that dark transaction brought into the world, now survives to inherit the fortune of the father, and the injured mother is enabled to live easy and independent for the rest of her days ; and who shall arraign her character ?" He then concluded with what he knew would be the most healing reflection he could suggest to her, assuring her that even Ezekiel Daw, with all his purity and preciseness, absolutely and entirely acquitted Susan May, and had asserted her innocence in the strongest terms to the Rev. Mr. Claypole, in a conversation on the subject.

As he was thus discoursing, the cloud that had gathered upon her countenance cleared away, and the shower it had been collecting began to vent itself at her eyes. Words were no longer wanting, but, like a spring repressed, burst out with increased volubility ; they were the unpremeditated effusions of a heart overcharged with its own feelings ; gratitude, astonishment, joy, transported her by turns from one to the other, yet she found expressions for them all, in broken sentences, after her manner, so that it was some length of time whilst Henry was fain to give patient hearing to her rhapsodies before he could perceive her spirits to subside into any tolerable degree of calmness ; and perhaps it was more owing to her being exhausted, than to any efforts on his part, when at last she became quiet and composed.

This interval, however, was but short ; for soon the recollection of his wound seized her afresh, and she began to moan and lament over him more piteously than at first : her imagination painted him expiring under the stab of an assassin ;

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all his noble generous acts rose in review ; accumulated obligations pressed upon her memory with such overwhelming weight, that her grateful soul sunk under it, and she cast herself prostrate at his feet, embracing them, and crying out, in broken accents, " The Lord of mercy save you! the widow's prayers protect and draw a blessing on you, in return for all your bounteous goodness, and for this your unspeakable tenderness in softening to my poor heart an event that would else have broken it, had any other tongue but your's reveal'd this dreadful secret to me!"

Here she was called off by a messenger sent in great haste from the vicarage to claim her instant assistance to Miss Claypole, who had been in strong hysterics since Henry had left her, and so terrified the old woman, her only attendant, that, after rousing the cottagers at the next door, she had dispatched one of them to Dame May, as a person of skill in such cases, and stocked with medicines to relieve them. The dame had great scruples about leaving her wounded friend ; but Henry insisting upon it, she obeyed the summons, and departed, taking with her a competent provision of such nostrums as she judged proper for the occasion.

In less than an hour she returned, having left her patient in a convalescent state ; but in this period the hysteric lady had in her ramblings been so communicative, that the good dame, who had at least as much curiosity as came to the share of any one individual, had perfectly informed herself of every particular that could elucidate the mystery of our hero's pretended accident : fraught with this information, she soon gave him to understand that she was no longer imposed upon, though he still persisted in taking it upon himself as a chance blow in the struggle, and that he was positive the lady had

had no serious intention of doing any injury either to him or herself. As the dame, however, was strenuous in unbelief, and he found himself rather faint and exhausted by loss of blood, he cut short the argument, by desiring her to prepare Ezekiel's bed for his repose; but as he well knew her passion for telling news was not a whit inferior to her pleasure in hearing it, he was very earnest with her to keep secret what she had heard from Fanny Claypole, or rather what she herself suggested from the ramblings of a disordered imagination, stating to her how extremely dishonourable it would be in her, who acted in a medical capacity, to disclose the secrets of a patient, which, he observed, would be a heinous sin against the inviolable free-masonry of the faculty.

Henry retired to his repose with the pleasing reflection that he had compounded a very heavy penalty with a slight fine, for such he now considered his wound to be; and indeed the pure habit of his body would have accommodated itself to a demand of a more serious nature than this was likely to prove; for the knife had only pierced the fleshy part of his arm, without any material injury: neither was he the less happy in his present quarters for the testimony which every thing about him bore to the taste and benignity of the beloved person who had provided them: every object he now looked upon, every comfort he enjoyed, was of Isabella's bestowing; and whilst he fed on that delightful recollection, no wonder if the grateful approaches of sleep, so sweetly recommended, stole upon his senses with peculiar softness, till, by the magic of his dreams the air-drawn image of his beauteous Isabella rose to view, graced with ten thousand charms, and pictured to the height of fancy's warmest colouring, kind, happy, greeting him

him with smiles of love, consenting, melting into soft desires, and self-surrendered to his fond embrace.

CHAPTER. X.

Our wounded Hero bleeds afresh.

THE next morning Henry arose with recruited strength: the air was so fresh, and the sun so gay, that if we had any ambition to emulate our brother novelists in description, here is the very moment for it; but we decline the opportunity.

Dame May examin'd his wound, and perceiving that Dame Nature was in the humour to take the cure out of her hands, humbly resigned the task into her care, and contented herself with the simple application of a fresh pledget of dry lint, and swath'd it as before. She now set out her tea-table in its holiday trim, and administer'd the ceremonies of breakfast in her very best stile: when this service was dispatch'd, she left her guest in possession of her parlour, and address'd herself to her own domestic affairs in another quarter.

She had not left him many minutes, when her lovely patroness stepped into the house, unseen by Henry;—"It occurs to me," said Isabella to the dame, "that something may be wanting in your friend Mr. Daw's apartment, and therefore I shou'd be glad to look it over before he arrives."—Without stopping for an answer, she nimbly ascended the stairs. The good dame's thoughts were rather from home at that moment, and not present to the recollection that Henry's bed-chamber was
not

not exactly in a state fit to receive the visit of a young lady; instead therefore of stopping her on the stairs, she hobbled after her into the room;—"Heyday," cried Isabella, upon looking about her, "what is this? somebody has slept here I perceive."—"Lackaday!" exclaimed the dame, "I humbly ask your pardon for not stopping you in time. Dear good young lady, be not offended with me; but indeed you was so nimble, and took me, as I may say, at such a nonplus, that I never thought to tell you that the chamber was not fit for you to come into. Sure enough, though, it was my sweet dear young friend, Mr. Henry himself, who reposed himself in that bed last night, (Heaven bless him!) and I have not had leisure yet to set the rooms to rights."

"Did he sleep here?" said the lovely intruder, as she was quitting the chamber; and just then recollecting that she was leaving the survey unfinished, which she came to make, stopt and cast her eyes deliberately round the room, observing that she wish'd it was more worthy of her guest, "But I hope at least," added she, with an encouraging smile, "you took care to air it well for your friend and benefactor."—"Heaven forbid!" cried Goody May, "that I should bring his precious life into danger; there are wretches enough in this world too ready to do that, the more shame their's; but I say nothing; the Lord he knows their hearts and mine also, how it bleeds for him at this moment; and that's the reason I was so absent in my duty to you. Well, to be sure, the wickedness of some folks is surprising; I am sure it will be more God's mercy than my skill, if my dear Mr. Henry escapes out of their murderous hands alive."

"Bless me!" cried Isabella, "I protest you
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startle me. Is Mr. Henry now in the house?" Goody May answering in the affirmative, Isabella came silently down the stairs, and understanding he was in the parlour, turned into the common room which was opposite to it, making a sign to her follower to do the same. Here she immediately began a course of questions, which soon betrayed the communicative dame into so complete a recital of every circumstance respecting Henry's wound, that nothing she had collected from Miss Claypole in her fit, and which Henry had conjured her to keep secret, was untold. There is reason to believe, this poor woman would have gone to death for Henry's sake, whilst she was thus running counter to his injunctions; but to deny herself the pleasure of broaching a piece of news, particularly one so honourable to Henry, and so interesting to the hearer, was a virtue which her nature could not reach; a sacrifice her resolution was not equal to

Henry, in the meanwhile, unconscious of what was passing so near him, sat in the little parlour with his eyes fixt upon the print of Isabella's father that hung opposite to him, pondering in his mind the lovely vision of the preceding night, his imagination fascinated with the contemplation of her matchless beauty, her engaging manners, and attractive graces, when behold the sound of the lock drew his eyes to the door, which, gently opening, disclosed to his sight the very object of his meditations in her existing and substantial form, more exquisitely beautiful than any shade that fancy ever pictured in the poet's brain: surprised, enraptured, he started from his chair, and in the momentary transport that deprived him of reflection, ran and caught her in his arms: instantly undeceived, and convinced it was no shadow he embraced

embraced, terrified at what he had done, he drop upon his knee, and beg'd for pardon.—“I was deceiv'd,” he cried; “my mind had left me, and was stray'd beyond realities: I saw you in my meditations, and, like a man delirious, seiz'd what in my better senses I would not offend for worlds, and know myself unworthy to approach.”

What passed in Isabella's mind, whilst Henry was thus pleading for pardon at her feet, words will not describe, for she made use of none: it was not anger, for her looks were melting soft; it could not but be modesty, for blushes spread all over her fair face; no doubt but sensibility had a share in it, for tears bedewed her cheeks.

He was preparing to proceed with his apology, when a shriek from Isabella stopt his speech, and instantly he perceived the blood streaming from his wound.—“Behold,” he cried, “how justly I am brought to recollectinn of my offence.” Isabella, in the mean time, frightened past the power of motion, kept calling out for Goody May. It was obvious that her sudden appearance had surpris'd him into an exertion, that had opened his wound afresh, when he inconsiderately threw his arms about her waist. The poor woman, terrified with what she heard and saw, in her confusion scarce knew what to do first; but recollecting, after a few moments, the process she had before observed, begged Isabella to assist in opening his coat sleeve, whilst she hastened to her repository for means to stop the blood. Isabella, pale and trembling as she was, summon'd spirits to assist in supporting his arm, as well as in the operation of untying the tapes Goody May had sewed upon his sleeve, which she had ripped open over the wounded part. The business most immediately necessary was soon effected by the application of
fresh

fresh lint and the former styptic; but Isabella's horrors at the glimpse she had of his wound were not so soon dismissed. Henry's attention was so totally absorbed in his care for his fair assistant, that he seemed to have no sense of what he was doing to himself, and he would fain have dismissed the operatrix for hartthorn and water, before she had secured the bandage; but when he felt the gentle touch of Isabella, engaged in the work jointly with the old woman,—“Who wou'd not gladly shed his blood,” he cried, “for such an honour?” and now a certain tender glance from Isabella's eyes made answer in so flattering a language, that the heart of our hero, so far from sinking under its loss, seemed to beat with double energy and spirit.

The hartthorn and water was now brought, Isabella recovered, and her alarm having subsided, the prudent dame thought her presence was no longer necessary, and retired.

“We look'd for you last night,” said Isabella; “my father charg'd Susan with a message to that purpose, and to prevent mistakes I wrote you a short note; but I understand from Susan that you did not receive it.”

“I hope,” replied he, fixing his eyes upon the floor, “she told you at the same time upon what motive I denied myself that happiness.”

“She did,” rejoined Isabella; “the letter I received from her this morning does credit to her heart and justice to your honour, not only in the trifling matter of my note, but in a circumstance of real self-denial, in which, permit me to say, you have given the noblest proof of an exalted generosity.”

“If I merit your praise,” said Henry, “in either instance, it is in that which you term the
more

more trifling instance of the two: it is no hard task for a man not mercenary to act as I did in the affair of Blachford, for it is a victory over a mean and abject passion; but there is some struggle to obey the dictates of honour, when it calls upon us to oppose the strongest impulse and affection that the heart can feel; but your commands to Susan May were positive, and I obey'd them."

"They were calculated," she rejoined, "for your accommodation; you had another engagement, and solicitation is in that case an embarrassment to a well-bred man."

"There," said he, "you lead me to look back upon a transaction that covers me with confusion and self-reproach; yet, if it were a plea your purity might listen to, I have enough to say that wou'd acquit my conscience towards the engagement you allude to, though nothing can totally exculpate me from folly and infirmity. A fortunate explanation with Miss Claypole, yesterday evening, has set me free from all conditions of atonement, and I am happy it is in my power to assert with truth, that the promise I held myself bound to make was not a composition for the loss of innocence on her part, but simply for the risque of reputation."

"Whatever you seriously assert," Isabella replied, "I implicitly believe; but when you call your explanation with that lady a fortunate one I should suspect you are once more guilty of forgetting you have a wound, that demands more care and attention than you seem dispos'd to afford it. If you are to shed your blood with such repeated profusion in every lady's company you chance upon, and one is to give, another to renew your wounds, I think you are in a likely way to become a victim to the sex."

"I see

"I see," said Henry, smiling, "that my old prattling dame has broke faith with me, and let out all she knows, with more, perhaps, than her information warrants; but in your heavenly nature I well know there will be found a principle of candour, that can look with pity on the extravagances of an uncorrected temper, and consign them to oblivion. If the tongue of this gossip can be stopt in time, we may yet suppress a story, that wou'd do no credit to Miss Claypole; and in this I flatter myself your good nature will assist me. For my own part, I propose to wait here no longer than till Lady Crowbery arrives, who must pass this door in her way, and whom I am bound to see once more before I leave England."

"What are you talking of?" said Isabella, fixing her expressive eyes despondingly upon him. — "Can you think of leaving us at this moment and trusting yourself in this condition on board a ship? Can there be any such cruel necessity to make so rash a sacrifice of yourself? Can my gentle Lady Crowbery require it of you? Will her humanity permit it? Nay, when you consider how disconsolate she will leave us, will your own?"

"Oh, thou angelic sweetness!" he exclaimed, gently taking her hand in his, "my gratitude, my duty, my destiny demand this effort, for which, if I might now expose to you all the motives, you wou'd confess them such as I must be a monster if I shrunk from, how severe soever the separation they compel me to. And can I look upon those eyes, and see them beaming with such soft compassion on me, forbear to tell you what I suffer by this painful effort? No, loveliest of your sex, whom present, absent, my poor heart devotedly adores, it is in vain
to

to counterfeit; you see, you know the violence I commit against my nature, when I suppress its feelings; you perceive I love you. What shall I say? How shall I palliate my presumption? Yet reflect with pity on my case; remember I have liv'd by sufferance in your sight; (could I see and not admire you?) have by your condescension been indulged beyond my humble merit, with some moments of your privacy; (could I converse with you, and not be charmed?) in short, I have contemplated perfection in your mind and person, and fixt your image on my heart so deep and so indelible, that if to love you be a crime, I am unpardonably guilty."

"You are not guilty," said Isabella, looking down, and blushing as she spoke, "to me at least not guilty."

"I know," resumed Henry, "who it is that print which faces me reflects--your excellent father; I know your love, your piety, to that best of parents, and can well believe the patience you now hear me with springs from pity; on that therefore I build no false presumptuous hopes; for I know the difficulties of my present situation; the distance to which it throws me, and I would scorn to take advantage of your private moments for saying any thing in a whisper, which I dar'd not openly to repeat in the presence of Sir Roger Manstock himself: if then, at this instant, the fatherly eye within that frame had sight, though I might shrink from it a while, mysterious as I am compelled to be, yet in my conscience I shou'd stand acquitted, because I know myself."

A start of surprise from Isabella, and a look betokening curiosity, at this moment directed towards him, checked him from proceeding; after a pause, he repeated—"Yes, loveliest Isabella, I know myself, and hope I shall in time be known."

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Here Henry stopt ; it seemed as if the most important secret of his life was upon the verge of discovery. Isabella too was silent ; she was debating in her thoughts whether she should urge him to explain, or repress her curiosity ; the latter seemed most honourable, and she decided for it : at last, turning towards him with a look of inexpressible sweetness, she thus addressed him—"Henry (so let me call you, till I know by what addition else to accost you) I wou'd not wish to have the keeping of a secret, that might cause regret to you for having parted with it ; neither is there any information wanting to convince me you are nobly born ; I am certified of that by my own observation, and have long been so. Honour, and worth, and genius may emerge from low originals, but elegance and delicacy of manners are rarely natives of a coarse and rustic soil. A strange idea haunts me : shall I confide it to you ? I have really thought at times, or fancy may have feign'd it, that you have a mark'd resemblance in your air and features to my beloved Lady Crowbery, as I remember her some few years ago : this may be mere imagination ; but I have humour'd myself in it the rather, because it helps me naturally to account for certain situations I have seen her in with you, which else might seem at variance with her strict reserve and delicacy of conduct : I can almost persuade myself you are after some manner related to her ; at least these have been my idle reveries ; but never did one syllable to that effect escape my lips till now ; I am not quite so fond of tattling as our good dame. And now, moreover, I recollect amongst the motives you enumerated for leaving us, you mention'd duty : be it so ! we must conform ourselves to duty ; but let me hope that we shall meet again."

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“And do you wish it?” said he, looking tenderly upon her.—“Do I wish it?” she repeated.—“Oh Henry! Henry! if that’s a question with you, where is your intelligence?”—Here the tears stopt her, and she leant her forehead on his shoulder, covering her face with her handkerchief.—“Heaven guard your life!” she cried; “may no female dæmon ever more attempt it! Horrid creature! shameless abandon’d being! what phrenzy cou’d possess her! Come not in her way; oh Henry, I conjure you; never look upon her more; I cou’d not bear the sight of her; I blush to think that I have ever convers’d with such a woman. But you, thank Heaven, had virtue to resist her, and virtue, sure, without a blush, may give the hand to virtue.”

This said, she took his hand. The manner of the action stamped it with the seal of modesty, and modestly it was received, though love was the inspirer: it was the silent contract of their hearts, pledged with the tender interchange of sighs and looks, that bade farewell, and vowed unalterable constancy: again she pressed his hand—“And are you now convince’d,” she asked, “how anxiously I shall wish for your return? Yes, Henry, I’m free to own, my hopes, my happiness, my heart goes with you.”

Oh! ecstasies how pure! moments how precious! ’tis now, O love, that virtue’s self may welcome thee without reserve or coyness; composed of these chaste qualities, honour may lodge thee in his heart’s best core; *yea, in his heart of heart*; the moral hand may paint, the modest eye peruse thee in this attitude; come ever thus, thou best and worst of deities, or dwell not with us long upon the scene! this will not raise a blush; Heaven warrants these endearments, and nature
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in this instance borrows no excuse from sophistry to palliate her propensities.

And now the tender conference closed: a servant of Lady Crowbery galloped past the window to announce her approach: Isabella saw the signal, and slowly rose from her seat; she paused a while, and it seemed as if something was in her mind to say, which she could wish to give utterance to, but it died away in a sigh. Henry pressed her hand to his lips in silence, and they parted.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

BOOK

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

CHAPTER I.

An Old Man's Prattle in a wintry Night.

AS the state of society becomes more refined, eccentricity of character wears away; a writer therefore of the present age, who aims to give amusing pictures of the humours of the times, finds nature less favourable to him in that respect than she was to those who resorted to her for the like purposes a century or two ago. This cannot be denied; but nature still is inexhaustible, and there is no need to emigrate from her domain in search of novelty and entertainment.

Originality of humour, or as it is more commonly called, a new character, in play or novel, is the writer's first aim, as it is sure to be the first in request by every spectator and critic, and the chief test by which his genius will be tried; but when we use the term originality as applied to the human character, we cannot be understood to mean a new creature, a being formed by fancy, and not to be found in nature, but simply a close copy, a happy likeness, of some striking character, whose peculiarities have a strong effect, either in the moral or the humour of our composition. The old drama abounds with personages of this sort, and as the moulds in which they were cast are now destroyed by time, we gaze upon them with surprise and delight, regarding them as non-descripts, or creatures of a separate species, though, at the time of their production, they were doubtless sketched from nature; and it is possible that the authors of that æra were not more applauded for their originality,

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nality, than we of the present time are by our contemporaries. When the critics therefore cry against the stage as fallen off in its spirit from the old masters, and seem to think we ought to exhibit as much novelty, and produce as much surprise by living characters, as they do by raising the dead, who are out of memory and forgotten, they require of us a power, which, though the witch of Endor had, no modern poet now can boast; hence it follows, that some amongst us, who are indignant of reproach, however unreasonable, being hurried upon rash attempts, either spend their talents in copying after copies, whilst they aim to paint the manners as they were in times past, or endeavouring to create the same surprise by modern novelties, find themselves carried out of nature and probability into the visions of extravagance and romance. This in its consequence brings disgrace upon the stage, by reducing comedy into farce, and farce into puppet-show and pantomime: the novelist, in the mean time, breaking loose from society, runs wild into forests and deserts, in search of caves and uninhabited castles, where, forgetting every law of nature, and even every feature of the human countenance, he paints men and women such as never were in existence, and then, amidst the shades of night and horror, rattles his chains, and conjures up his ghosts, till having frightened his readers out of their senses, he vainly supposes he has charmed them into applauses.

But the evil does not stop here; for as a man, who runs mad about the streets, will be followed by a mob, in like manner the rhodomontade of the novel is copied by the nonsense of the opera; and whilst ghosts glide over the stage, thunders roll, and towers tumble, to the amusement of the

galleries, the carpenter plays off his machinery to the roar of applauding crowds, and the author, if he has any feeling for the dignity of his profession, blushes at his triumphs, when he reflects that they are founded on the disgrace of the theatre.

Let the author then beware how he is piqued into absurdities by his own vanity, or the false taste of the public; if the genius that God has given him, and the matter that nature supplies him with, will not serve the purpose, let him drop the undertaking. If his imagination can frame incidents, combine them well, and weave them naturally into a pleasing fable, he has gained his point; but an over-anxiety to produce some striking novelty will most likely end in producing some striking absurdity. All ranks of life are open to his choice, and he has a right to select the strongest humours he can find; but if he does not find what suits his purpose in nature, he has no excuse for going out of it, whilst he professes to be a delineator of the living manners: fancy may ramble as she likes, if she avowedly beats about for imaginary beings; but if she produces her own creations, and calls them men and women, or paints characters out of date, and passes them upon us for contemporaries, she does more than she has fair warrant and authority to do.

What I have here said of character is applicable to incident: the writers of fiction are generally actuated by so strong a passion for the marvellous, that they seem to throw every thing off the hinges, merely to alarm us with the din and clatter they make. Of all wretched expedients, which barren genius can resort to, the abrupt introduction of casualties is one of the meanest; in the novels of the present day, we encounter them at every turn, yet they never impose upon credulity; for when the

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sick heroine at death's door threatens us with an exit, we are convinced she does not mean to favour us with the performance of it. Surely there is no occasion for all this ; neither is the impression very pleasing which it conveys.

If that originality of character, which we have been speaking of, is now become hardly attainable, discrimination is yet within reach ; and by a happy contrast of leading characters, although they shall not be really new, yet all the best effects of novelty may be obtained by an alternate play on each other's humours, by the means of which very comic and amusing situations may be struck out. Amongst our countrymen, the great masters of contrast in our own day are Fielding and Sterne : Square and Thwackum, Western and his sister, the father and the uncle of Tristram Shandy, are admirable instances : Shakspeare had it from nature, Johnson caught it from Aristophanes ; Socrates and the Clown Strepsiades, in the comedy of *The Clouds*, is, perhaps, the most brilliant contrast of comic humour in the now-existing records of the stage, ancient or modern.

Let me suppose I am now speaking to a young author, sitting down for the first time to his maiden work. The first thing necessary is to understand himself, the next, to know the age, in which he writes: when his nerves are fortified with a proper confidence in his own powers, let that confidence be tempered with all the respect, which is due to people of an enlightened understanding, who are to be his examiners and judges. It is a very sacred correspondence, that takes place between the mind of the author and the mind of the reader ; it is not like the slight and casual intercourse we hold with our familiars and acquaintance, where any prattle serves to fill up a few social minutes, and set the ta-

ble in a roar ; what we commit to our readers has no apology from hurry and inattention ; it is the result of thought well digested, of sentiments by which we must stand or fall in reputation, of principles for which we must be responsible to our contemporaries and to posterity.

In the degree of entertainment our productions may have the fortune to afford, our expectations may be pardonably mistaken ; but in what offends good morals, or sins against the truth of nature, we err without excuse ; self-love cannot blind us in these respects, because it is not a matter of talents, but of rectitude and common sense. We talk of critics as of men set apart on purpose to annoy and censure us ; whereas every reader is a critic, and publishes his opinion of us wherever he goes ; we ourselves are critics in our turn, and what we complain of in our own persons we do to others ; and though few think it worth their while to publish their criticisms, let it be remembered that some men's voices circulate further than other men's publications.

Let us, therefore, who write, weigh well the duty of the task we engage in, and let the puerile practice of invoking the mercy of our readers be no more thought of, for, generally speaking, we are entitled to no more mercy than liberal-minded men will give us without our begging for it : I am aware of some exceptions, and am, I hope, as sensitive towards such cases as I ought to be ; but I am now speaking generally of authors, who write for fame, and not for bread. If these had all the diffidence they affect to have, how came it not to stand in their way when they resorted to the press ? And why this terror of the critics ? An author cannot be harmed by a bad critic ; and why should he be afraid of being benefited by a good one ?

CHAPTER II.

The best Friends must part.

WE closed our last book with the parting of Henry and Isabella, in one of those situations which we would rather refer to the reader's imagination than aim to describe. Happily for him, his friendly hostess gave no interruption to his meditations, nor did they wander from their beloved object, till the sound of Lady Crowbery's wheels called him out to meet her. The chaise was stopt at the gate of the cottage-garden, and her attendant got out by her lady's order, and stepped aside, whilst Zachary and the nurse, who occupied a hackney carriage, halted in the rear. When Henry's conversation with his mother was over, and they had parted, he engaged the driver of Zachary's chaise to take him back to Crowbery on his return, which was accordingly done, and he once more found himself in the hospitable cottage with his friend Ezekiel.

To him he purposed to dedicate the remainder of that day, and the next morning to join the ship, according to the notice he had received from Captain Cary. Upon his arrival, he found that Blachford had breathed his last, and Susan May, with her infant, had taken possession of his quarters at the cottage; he therefore determined upon going on that evening to the port, and to wait no longer than till a chaise could be brought from the neighbouring post town. When he had passed some time with Susan and honest Daw, in discoursing on their affairs, and had contrived to satisfy their anxiety about his wound, with as little violence to truth as the suppression of Miss Claypole's name

name would admit of, a tap at the door announced a visitor, when young Tom Weevil presented himself, clad in his best apparel, carrying a wallet or knapsack at the end of a crooked stick upon his shoulder, with a cutlass slung in a buff belt round his waist.

The preacher, seeing an armed man enter his house, started from his seat, and marching up to him with an intrepid air, cried out, "What ail'st thou, Thomas Weevil, that thou hast armed thyself in this fashion? speak, is it peace, Jehu?"—"With your leave, Doctor Daw," replied the young miller, "my business is with the gentleman there, and not with you."—"Render up your purpose to my ears, Thomas Weevil," repeated Ezekiel, "for thou shalt not pass me to approach my guest, until thou hast answered to my question; Is it peace?"—"I know not what you mean by your question," quoth Tom, "for be it peace or be it war, all's one to me, seeing that I am come to tender my services to Mr. Henry, who, I understand, is going over sea to foreign countries; and as I bear, do you see, in grateful mind, that he has sav'd my life, I think it but just and right to risque it in his service; and so I am here ready to follow him to the world's end; that's all, Master Zekiel, I have to say."

"And thou hast said well, friend Thomas," quoth Ezekiel, "therefore pass in peace, and make thyself welcome with a cup of my best ale, which I will forthwith administer unto thee." So saying, the good man went out, on *hospitable thoughts intent*.

At the same time old Weevil made his appearance, and repeated to Henry the same tender, in nearly the same terms, adding, that he had given his free consent to Tom's departure; for, God
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be thank'd, he had sons enough left to keep the mill going the whilst. "Tom," said he, "has play'd a little loose to be sure, but he has seen his error, and that is every thing. He is a good lad in the main, and has a grateful heart." Here Ezekiel came to them, bearing in his hand a lusty pitcher, and saluting the miller with a friendly nod, set it down on the tressel-board, invitingly full and frothing.

Henry now, having given his hand to the father first, and afterwards to the son, expressed himself very sensibly affected by the offer they had made him. He was going out, he told them, with a gallant captain, in a ship of war, who might possibly fall in with an enemy before he found his port—"and who can tell," said he, "where an unlucky shot may glance? I shou'd be sorry therefore to expose my friend Tom to broken bones, tho' I know him to be a brave fellow." To this Tom replied, that he despis'd danger in his service; that he was ready to share his fortune by sea and by land; that he had got his father's leave, and had a longing desire to see the world; in short, that it wou'd break his heart if Henry wou'd not permit him to go with him. This was again seconded by old Weevil, when Ezekiel, rising up, and putting himself into his accustomed posture, took up his parable as follows:—"Thy zeal, young man, to share the fortune of him, who, under Providence, was the preserver of thy life, indicates a grateful mind, and I commend thee therefore; and thou, son Henry, must no longer oppose the laudable desire, which this youth hath express'd, of devoting himself to thy service, seeing it is no less a part of generosity, in some cases, to receive an obligation, than to bestow one: it sufficeth that thou hast ingenuously forewarn'd

Thomas

Thomas Weevil of the dangers he may chance to incur in the course of thy peregrination. And verily I am myself at this moment in no small strait, having fully purposed not to suffer thee to depart alone, but to bear thee company in thy travels in pure affection of heart, knowing thee to be of a bold adventurous spirit, which pusheth thee into dangers; these, if by counsel and experience I could not avert, I might at least have shar'd, being resolute to go with thee, if need requir'd, even unto death. But now behold the corpse of Mr. Blachford lieth yet unburied, and having been the happy means of turning him from the error of his ways, can I fail to attend his body to the grave, and not be present to put up a prayer for the repose of his soul? And lo! here is the damsel also, who hath suffer'd violence by him, and whose heart now faileth her through fear of slander, needeth one to console her and support: who then but myself, the friend of her mother the widow, and witness to the confession of her seducer, who was once a son of Belial, excusing her and accusing himself, is so fitted to that labour of love? These, not to mention the care of her worldly affairs, which lieth on me, are amongst the calls by which the trouble of my heart is enlarged, when I reflect that I must suffer thee, son Henry, to depart alone; yet not alone, if so be this friendly youth, whose grateful tender of himself I do exhort thee to accept, shall be thy companion by the way. And now seeing the hour of thy departure approacheth, and the evening draweth on, I must be brief, as is my manner of speech, saying only those things which it were a shame to omit, and praying the Lord of all mercy to preserve thee in all thy goings, beseeching him to dispose thy heart to continue stedfast in his fear and

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and love amidst all the temptations of this sinful world, and in his good time to return thee and this thy companion safe and unhurt to your rejoicing friends."

The good man having concluded his harangue, lifted the pitcher to his lips and drank a farewell to his parting guests for Henry's chaise had now come up to the door. Tom Weevil, whose offer was accepted joyfully, bestired himself in stowing Henry's baggage and his own upon the carriage; and now the moment came when our hero, taking Ezekiel's hands in his, tenderly addressed him in these words—"Farewell, my worthy friend; where-ever Providence disposes of me and whatever may befall me, whilst I retain life and memory, your kindness, benevolence, charities, and virtues will be register'd in my heart."—Then turning to Susan, who stood mute with sorrow at seeing him prepare to depart, her cheeks bathed with tears he took her in his arms, and, after a tender embrace, recommended her to the protection of Ezekiel, saying—"I leave you to the care of this good man, who will also stand in my place as guardian of your infant till I return to you again: he knows the purport of Mr. Blachford's will, and will take the measures on my part as executor, which a prudent care of your interest will prescribe; I need not caution you to observe a proper attention to the amiable young lady, in whose service you will now no longer remain. To this your best of benefactors you owe the duty of a daughter, and you will not fail to pay it, for to his pious exhortations it is owing, that the father of your child was brought to a sense of the injuries he had done you, and induced to atone for them; at the same time take notice, that this excellent creature suffer'd not one shilling of the deceas'd to adhere to his fin-

gers, notwithstanding every offer which, to my knowledge, was repeatedly press'd upon him by that penitent on his death-bed."—"This," said he, addressing himself to old Weevil, who was standing by, "is a noble instance of disinterestedness, and merits the applause of every honest man."—Then giving his hand to Weevil, he bade him farewell, promising him to take care of his son; and hastening out of doors, stepped into his chaise, followed by Tom, and was off as fast as four nimble horses and two dashing drivers could transport him.

In the mean time silence reigned in the cottage: Ezekiel committed himself to his wicker chair, and remained in pensive meditation: Susan seated herself by his side, and as he rested his hand upon the arm of his chair, pressed her lips upon it, and bathed it in her tears: old Weevil felt an aching in his throat, and applied himself to the pitcher without uttering a word. Ezekiel seeing this, roused himself in his seat, and cried, though in a faltering voice, "Courage, neighbour, we have only parted from our friends, we have not lost them."—"No, no," cried the miller, as he took the pitcher from his lips, "to be sure, as you say, we have not to mourn over the loss of them, but somehow or other it makes one feel a little queer; for, as nobody can be sure of life for an hour to come, parting methinks is, as I may say, like taking leave for ever."—"Heaven, in its mercy, forbid that," cried Susan, and burst aloud into an agony of grief.—"Child, child," said Ezekiel, "moderate thy wailing; it becometh not us to give way to inordinate grief: what hast thou lost which I have not lost, and dost thou see me give way to this unseemly weakness? why dost thou not take example by me? thou seest, damsel, that I am firm and unshaken."

shaken." Here his voice began to quiver, and he seemed fighting against something that rose in his throat, and would not suffer him to proceed. "I know," cried Susan, "we should not anticipate affliction, but when a dreadful image is presented to my imagination, how can I forbear to feel a horror at the thoughts of losing such a friend for ever? Think only what he has been to me; think what he is, how kind, how gentle, how benevolent! Call to mind his virtues, his sufferings, his humility"——Ezekiel groaned.——"What poverty, what persecution he has endured."——Ezekiel marked his assent with a motion of his head, muttering to himself, with a sigh, that it was true. "You, I am sure," said Susan, turning to Weevil, "have cause to bless him, you can witness to his good deeds, and you can also tell how he was rewarded for them; but let the dead sleep in peace; there are some still living whose malice never sleeps, there is no end to their attempts against his life, wicked wretches! it is to some of them he owes that wound, which he would make us believe is accident, because he's all forgiveness: but I believe some villain has beset him: Heavens! what must that man's heart be made of?"——"Mill-stones," said Ezekiel.——"I wish I had them between mine," quoth Weevil, "by the Lord Harry I would squeeze them."——"I know whereabouts they are," rejoined Susan, "and what their spite springs from; and now, my dear Mr. Daw, can you wonder I am afflicted, when such is their diabolical malice, that perhaps even now they have a plot upon his life, and are lying in wait to destroy him."——These words seizing the brain of Ezekiel, he sprung upon his legs, and with an asseveration not far short of an oath, declared he would that instant go forth and defend him. Susan, who saw the phrensy, cried out to Weevil to
stop

stop him. Are you beside yourself, friend Daw," said the miller, "to think of overtaking four post-horses with one pair of legs? what the plague, is not my son Tom there to guard him, and didn't they set off helter skelter as if the devil drove them? why by this time they are half way to the sea side, and who should stop them? Our friend Susan does but speak as all women do when they are in a fright; and I thought you was too much a man to be startled by what they say."—"I believe," replied Daw, resuming his dignity, "I am as much of a man as my neighbours, and not less a friend to my fellow-creatures than I ought to be. I am not apt to be idle when the wicked are a-foot, and innocence is in danger. However, I do recollect that they went off with speed, and that there is little likelihood I can with all my exertions overtake them, tho' I hold myself no mean pedestrian, and yield to no one in the race on foot. Howbeit, I decline the contest against such odds; but no sooner shall to-morrow's sun rise than I will rise with him, and step over to the port to see if all be well; and, if aught be wanting, to stand forth in their service and defence.

"Wilt thou," cried Weevil, "then I am with thee, and will whip thee over in my jockey-cart in a trice, you'll go as easy as if you was in your own wicker chair. I will be here at thy door by the first peep of day. What say'st thou, is't agreed?"—"Agreed!" cried Ezekiel, "but hold, what day in the week will to-morrow be?"—"Thursday," said the miller.—"I protest that is lucky," replied the preacher, "for had it been the Lord's day I could not have gone with thee."—"Then give me hold of your hand," quoth Weevil, "for damn me if thou art not as good a heart as lives, and if ever I have slipt out any thing in the way of
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joke to offend thee, I am heartily sorry for it, and I ask thy pardon."—

"Enough," quoth Daw, "and more than enough, friend Thomas; for I could have credited thy good-will without an oath; however drink, and let us empty the pitcher.

CHAPTER III.

Our Hero goes out to Sea.

PUNCTUAL to his appointment, Miller Weevil presented himself, by break of day, at the door of Ezekiel's castle, where, having seated the apostle by his side, directly over the axletree of a vehicle, which, if it had been constructed professedly as an instrument of torture, might have done credit to the ingenious cruelty of its inventor, he set forward on a round trot, jolting him over ruts and rocks with a merciless indifference the straightest way to his point, till they came in view of the sea, with the frigate riding at anchor. Ezekiel, who now saw a period to the persecution he had endured for two long hours, took courage, and being just then in a sandy pass, availed himself of the first moment he could venture to put his tongue to any use, having wisely kept it still whilst his teeth were in motion: the scene was magnificent; the sun, which was flaming in their rear, threw a gleam of splendour over the shore, the ship and the expanse of waters, that terminated the prospect. Objects like these could not fail to carry up Ezekiel's thoughts to the Creator of all things; in his soul Devotion, eagle-winged, fate ever ready to catch the signal for soaring in its flight towards Heaven; accordingly

accordingly he began, in a lofty cadence, to rehearse that portion of the 107th psalm, which begins "*They that go down to the sea in ships.*" His charioteer in the mean while, struck with the awful strain, respectfully slackened his pace and listened in silence, pondering the fate of his son, then floating on the surface of that tremendous ocean, in the mercy of Him "*at whose word the stormy wind ariseth.*"

When Ezekiel ceased his recitation, Weevil observed that the words were very fine, though he was pretty sure he had heard them before. "I believe thou hast," quoth Ezekiel, "if thou didst ever hear the psalms."—"If so," said he, "I wish you wou'd double down the leaf for son Thomas, for I think every man who goes to sea shou'd have the fear of God before his eyes."—"And whither shou'd any man go without it?" said Ezekiel; and immediately struck into that enraptured passage of the same sublime minstrel, "*Whither shall I go then from thy spirit,*" &c.

This again drew the profoundest attention from Weevil, who, at the conclusion, expressed himself very highly delighted with what he had heard, observing, that he firmly believed it all, and that no man could commit a bad action safely, for that God's eyes were every where; "and I make no doubt," added he, "but that villain Bowsey, tho' he has got out of our reach, will fall into the hands of justice sooner or later, and pay sauce for his wickedness in the end; and as I hold him to be a murderer all one as if Tom had died under his hand, I don't despair of seeing him brought to the gallows in God's good time."—"Neighbour Weevil," replied Ezekiel, "it is not in the death, but in the conversion of a sinner that our God delighteth, and thou, taking pattern from his mercy,

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cy, shouldst abstain from vengeance, seeing it belongeth not to thee, but to him alone. Forbear, therefore, to wish for the punishment of that runnagate, wish rather for his repentance. Do all things, my friend, in love and charity to all men; give thy heart to him that deserves it, thy help to all that stand in need of it. Remember that the law tries our actions, but God judges our thoughts. There is a rule, short, easy, equitable—*Do as you would be done by*, and you cannot do wrong.”—“Why that’s exactly the rule I follow,” said the miller; “if a man does me a good turn, I requite him with one as good; if he does me an ill one, I pay him in his own coin; and if he robs and plunders me, like that villain Bowsey, I wish to see him hang’d; that’s my way, and I believe it’s very natural.”

Weevil was not famous for drawing right conclusions, and Ezékiel would hardly have failed to convince him of it, had not he just then turned into his inn-yard, under the sign of the ship, where he was instantly accosted by his son Thomas, who had just come off from the ship to procure some things that Henry had occasion for: one of the frigate’s boats was waiting for him, and his job would be dispatched in half an hour, when he would go with them on board, where Henry was. This interval Weevil proposed to fill up with a good breakfast; for whatever his companion might think of the matter, he at least recollected that he had come away from home fasting.

There was a fellow in the kitchen, belonging to the boat, who called himself the captain’s cockswain, who made himself known to our travellers upon hearing them say they were going on board; he had been taking leave of a nymph of the shore, who went by the dubious title of his wife, and indeed

deed it may well be questioned if that honourable and happy title was more than nominal; she was however in tears, and Jack was comforting her and himself with a glass of brandy, whilst he repeated to her in a lamentable tone his parting vows, interlarding them with a continual repetition of "Only be true to me, Poll; and clenching his promises of reciprocal fidelity with oaths of so peculiar a sort, as made Ezekiel stare with astonishment, though he hardly knew what interpretation to put upon them. At last, when the fellow had pretty well disposed of every particle about himself to some devil or other, to hold in pledge for his constancy to his beloved mate, Ezekiel, though in close action at that moment with the salted buttock of an ox, laid down his knife and fork, and began to take the swearer to task. "Friend," said Ezekiel, "thou hast talk'd in so loud a tone, that thou hast made us hearers of thy conversation whether we wou'd or not; I perceive with regret that in the midst of thy affliction at parting from thy spouse, thou hast exhorted her to constancy frequently, and in such a manner as argues a suspicion of her fidelity to thee in thine absence: what cause thou hast to hold in doubt the virtue of the wife of thy bosom I cannot tell, as thou hast stated no actual charge against her; but I shou'd hope the young woman hath not entered into the holy state of wedlock without weighing and perpending the duties of a wife, and also what a heinous sin it is to violate the nuptial bed: if she knoweth this, what need is there for thy so frequent repetitions on a case so clear? If she knoweth it not, I am here ready to instruct her in her matrimonial offices to the best of my abilities."

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lor, eyeing him from head to foot with the most sovereign contempt; "I'll tell you what, brother, 'twill be the worst job you ever took in hands in your life. You, indeed! you, with those lantern jaws, pretend to talk to my Poll; you, with that lank carcase, for all the world like the purser's shirt upon a hand-spike." And now the lady, no less irritated than her spokesman, joined her treble to the base, overwhelming poor Ezekiel with a torrent of words not the most courtly, in a key not the most harmonious, whilst he stood staring with astonishment on them both, yielding however no one inch of ground from the post he had taken, nor from the upright attitude in which he stood, conscious of having given no offence, save that his zeal had innocently intruded a kind offer where it was not called for. But soon the din became general; for Weevil, the miller, had now turned out on the part of his friend, whilst the landlady, who exerted her voice for peace and silence, roared louder, and with more fury than the parties themselves, who were vociferous enough in the controversy without her help. When this confusion was at the height, and the sailor, now roused, like the lion, with his own roar, was become ferocious, thundering out his oaths by whole broadsides at a volley, a stripling youth, or rather boy, in the uniform of a midshipman, stepping up to him, and catching hold of a button of his jacket, cried out in a shrill emasculate voice,—“What's here to do with you, rascal? hold your jaw and jump aboard, you lubber, or I'll make you change your doxy for the gunner's daughter.”

Silence instantly ensued,—“Aye, aye, Sir!” cried the sailor, gave a shrug, pulled up his trousers, and was off like a shot.

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The youngster asked the landlady if the fellow had left any thing unpaid; and being told there was nothing on the score but a shilling for the brandy he and the lady had been drinking, he immediately discharged it, intimating to the aforesaid lady, that no more women would be admitted on board, as the frigate would weigh with the next tide.

Ezekiel contemplated this instance of discipline with surprize and admiration: the boyish age and person of the officer carried so little authority in appearance, that he could scarce account for the immediate effect it took upon the boisterous spirit of the sailor, and the obedience it produced.—“Truly, young gentleman,” he said, “there must be admirable order on board your ship, when an unruly nature can be so readily controul’d by a gentle one.”—“I believe, Sir,” said the boy, “we are as well off in that respect as our neighbours; Captain Cary supports his officers, and I fancy coat’s the surest way to keep the men in order.”—Ezekiel then enquired after his friend on board, said that he had come for the purpose of paying him a short visit before he sailed, and civilly requested permission to be passed to the ship in his boat.—“Most readily,” said this young commander; “I am only waiting for a man who is on shore on that gentleman’s business, and I shall be off directly.” At that instant Tom Weevil entered the kitchen, and the miller having paid the reckoning, Ezekiel with the father and son, under conduct of their warlike leader, proceeded to the beach, where the boat was manned and waiting. There was a heavy swell set in by the opposition of wind and tide, and further out a bar, on which the sea broke in a manner not a little formidable to a landsman’s eyes: the frigate was at anchor about two miles without this bar;

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Ezekiel and old Weevil were placed in the stern-sheets, Tom took his post at the bow, and the noisy fellow, now in office as cockswain, took his seat in the steerage, as perfectly under command of his beardless officer, as if the admiral of the fleet had been on board the boat. If Ezekiel was struck with surprise at the authority of the youngster on shore, he was still more so with his address and skill in manœuvring the boat through a sea, which he conceived was every instant about to overwhelm them in the waves. The miller, who was as much a novice in navigation as the preacher, exhibited strong symptoms of alarm, jumping up once or twice in the boat, for which he was very properly reprimanded by the youngster, who ridiculed his fears, telling him if he was afraid of being swamp'd, he went the very way to bring it about. Ezekiel, on the contrary, sat still and kept a steady countenance, not that he did not think he was at the last crisis of his fate, but because he possessed a mind tranquillized by religion, and perfectly resigned to that all-directing Being, to whom his mental ejaculations were then silently addressed. When they had struggled for some time on the bar, with lusty sinews and *hearts of controversy*, the young officer giving his orders with perfect firmness and precision, and all voices were hushed, but the shrill small pipe of a child, he cried to the cockswain—"Mind your helm and be damn'd to you! Steer steady; now, lads, give way all, and we are clear."—The energy was instantaneous; what cannot British sailors do? the boat was driven through the waves, the bar was passed, and they found themselves at once in deep water and a smoother sea: the little midshipman now bade them step the mast and hoist the sail; they shot before the wind, and quickly were

were along-side of the frigate. The humanity of this youngster gave orders for taking care of Ezekiel and old Weevil, as they awkwardly scrambled up the side; a lieutenant stood upon the gunwhale, giving orders about some fresh beef and other stores they had brought off in the cutter; and Ezekiel had another call upon his wonder and surprise, when he heard this lieutenant say to the young officer of the boat—"You have had a good tuzzle on the bar, Lord Frederick."—"So, so," replied Lord Frederick, and immediately taking off his hat, whilst he addressed his superior officer, informed him that these two gentlemen wished to speak to Mr. Fitzhenry. The answer was, that he was then in the cabin under the surgeon's hands, but if the gentlemen's business was urgent, he would direct them to be shewn the way to him. Ezekiel expressing a desire to be instantly admitted to his friend, was put under the guidance of a marine, whilst old Weevil went aside with Tom to his quarters.

When Ezekiel entered the cabin, he found Henry with his arm stripped, and the surgeon cleaning his wound; a kind salutation was all these friends could interchange in their present circumstances.—"This gentleman," said Henry, "who is the surgeon of the ship, is so kind to take in hand this paltry scratch, and I assure you, he gives a very handsome testimony to our good dame's performances."—"A scratch, do you call it?" cried Ezekiel, knitting his brow, "it is a perilous stab! I protest I did not think by your account it had been any thing like this:"—then addressing himself to the surgeon, he added,—"I pray you, learned Sir, what is your opinion of this ugly gash?"—"My opinion is," cried the surgeon, "that had it not been in the direction
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where fortunately it is, it might have been an ugly gash indeed; but as it is, I think it will be well in a few more dressings."—This he said without looking at Ezekiel, being then employed in applying a compress to the wound before he bound it up: having done this, he looked round for the speaker, whom he no sooner set his eyes on, than he said, "Is it you, Mr. Daw? I am very glad to see you."—Ezekiel stared upon him for a moment, then marching up to him, and taking him cordially by the hand, exclaimed,—“As I live, it is my old friend and favourite, Billy Williams; never trust me, but I rejoice to see thee in the land of the living, Mr. Williams; heartily I rejoice at thy well-doing, for I have much bewail'd thy sudden disappearance from amongst us, esteeming thee very truly for thy towardly disposition and good qualities, no less than for thy talents. If I mistake not, it is now going on to two years since you quitted neighbour Cawdle, and we knew not whither you went?”—This satisfied Henry's curiosity so far, and as they proceeded in their conversation, Williams filled up the interval with an account of himself in various ships to the present time, when having done his business with Henry, and answered all Ezekiel's enquiries, he respectfully took his leave and retired. And now our hero and his friend being left to themselves, had a conference of at least half an hour without interruption, when Captain Cary entered the cabin, who very kindly welcomed Ezekiel upon Henry's introduction of him: he lamented he could not ask him to dinner, as they were then weighing anchor, and should be out to sea. “We must think therefore,” said he, “how to get you on shore:” and the first lieutenant then entering the cabin, he desired him to hail the tender along-side of them,
and

and ask the loan of their boat to set Ezekiel and his friend Weevil on shore. They now adjourned to the quarter-deck, whilst Ezekiel's attention was deeply engaged with the exertions of the men at the capstan, where, for the time they are at work, they enjoy a kind of temporary saturnalia, venting their sea jokes without restraint, in a most ridiculous stile. All was new to Ezekiel, but the heavy moment of parting from Henry hung upon his heart, and now the tender's boat was hauled along side; the frigate swung with the tide; the sails were hoisting, the boatswain plied his whistle, the men swarmed upon the yards, the officers roared through their trumpets, Weevil was already in the boat, Ezekiel cast a parting look at Henry, threw his arms about his neck, sighed out a farewell; recommended him to providence, and committed himself to the boat.

CHAPTER IV.

*A certain interested Gentleman meets with a
Rebuff.*

THE tender's boatmen hawled off from the ship a few lengths, and then laid on their oars, and cheered the frigate, who now began to feel her sails and make way through the water: this roused Ezekiel from his torpor, and instantly his ears were assailed by three repeated cheers, in a much louder key from the whole crew of the tender, who had manned ship in compliment to Captain Cary: the frigate's crew returned the inspiring compliment, and then presenting her stern to the tear-full eyes of Ezekiel, she glided majestically over

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over the waves, scarce deigning them a curtsey as they sunk beneath her keel, conscious, as it should seem, that she was worthy to assert the empire of the flag which she displayed.

“Hurrah! my hearts,” cried the man in the steerage, the boat cut through the water.—“There she goes,” looking at the frigate, said one of the fellows at his oar.—“Damn me, but I wish I was in her,” repeated a second.—“Have you then a friend,” said Ezekiel, “on board that ship, whom you regret to part from? and is your heart agoniz’d with grief like mine?”—“Grief indeed!” cried the fellow, in a surly tone; “grief never came near my heart since I had one: I wish myself in her because I think she has a fighting captain on board, and there’ll be something to be got to make merry with on shore: but belike you are tender-hearted, and take on because your friend is gone to sea; if that be the case, do you mind me, do as I do, when I part from my wife, swab the spray out of your glims, and think no more about it.”—“I cannot be sure that I clearly understand thee, friend,” replied Ezekiel, “but I presume it makes to the benefit of thy country, that thou art void of feeling.”

As this did not reach the understanding of the tar, it produced no answer, and whatever want of feeling in Ezekiel’s sense of it there might be in those he had embarked with, there was such strength and alacrity, that our passengers soon found themselves safely landed on their native soil. A can of grog to the crew, and a slight refreshment for Weevil and Ezekiel, to revive languid nature, filled up the time, whilst the miller’s cart was getting ready, which at length safely landed our travellers at Ezekiel’s door, and not without many of those jars and jumbles emblematic of the troubles

troubles inseparably attendant on our passage through life.

Whilst Henry was now wafted into the ocean, and whilst the land he had left was sinking in the horizon of his prospect, the tender heart of his beloved Isabella had directed many a sigh to attend him over the watery waste. Lady Crowbery had arrived at Manstock-House, less exhausted with her first stage than could reasonably be expected: Sir, Roger, Isabella, Zachary Cawdle, every soul male and female in the family, were in motion to attend upon her, nor did the reverend Mr. Claypole fail to be amongst the forwardest to exhibit his devoirs: Fanny, meanwhile, remained in sullen solitude at the vicarage, her mind experiencing the various torments slighted passion is exposed to. Her secret was entombed in Isabella's breast; in that of Goody May it had a more precarious tenure; yet for the present she adhered to the injunctions she had received, and held her tongue. Lady Crowbery had remarked the condition of Henry's arm, but had taken up with the slight account he had given of it, the rather because she perceived he had a ready use of it. Little, however was said upon the subject whilst the family were about her, and Isabella did not think it necessary to speak of the interview she had at the dames.

When dinner was over, and Lady Crowbery's spirits seemed recruited by her repast and the company of her friends, an opportunity was taken by Sir Roger to introduce a subject, which he knew his friend Mr. Claypole to have much at heart, and which he opened, by enquiring if she had filled up Mr. Ratcliffe's vacancy. Upon her replying, that it was yet open, Sir Roger expressed his wishes in favour of his friend then present, for Claypole's delicacy had not prevailed with him to retire

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retire from the hearing of his own success at first hand, of which he very naturally entertained the most sanguine expectation.—“Are you a party in these wishes of your worthy friend?” said the Lady, addressing herself to Claypole.—“I confess to your Ladyship I am,” replied he, “and should hold myself infinitely bound to you for putting me in possession of those wishes.”—“Mr. Ratcliffe was a constant resident,” resumed she, “and, perhaps, you are not aware that I should stipulate with his successor to tread as nearly as possible in his steps.”—“I hope, Madam,” replied the Divine, somewhat piqued at the expression, “I should not fall short of my predecessor in any part of his practice.”—“In some of his doctrines, I believe, you differ, Mr. Claypole if I have been rightly inform’d.”—“As how, Madam, I beseech you,” reiterated the reverend gentleman, with eagerness, “in what one doctrine, fitting for Mr. Ratcliffe to hold, have I been found to differ from him, or fall short? I never had my orthodoxy question’d.”—Sir Roger looked at his niece with marks of surprise, but being a man of few words, waited silently for a further explanation of this mystery.—“In this respect,” said the Lady, “I conceive you differ: Mr. Ratcliffe put a value on a just and generous act, that would have led him to despise the man who gave him sordid counsel, or condemn’d him for a sacrifice of interest to conscience. This, I dare say, is your doctrine in the pulpit, Mr. Claypole, for I don’t doubt your orthodoxy; but, allow me to say, it was his also in the cloister; this he inculcated to Henry, whom he father’d, and who has nobly practis’d what he taught, by giving up the whole of Blachford’s fortune to the son of Blachford: this you condemn’d; but this my departed friend wou’d have so decidedly approv’d of, that I

take upon me to say, you differ in your doctrine; and being employ'd in seeking out some successor, who shall, as I before said, tread as nearly as possible in the steps of that excellent and ever-lamented friend, I can only tell you, that I have not yet discover'd the person that answers to my search.

Here the lady ceased from speaking. The persons present were Sir Roger Manstock, Isabella, and the gentleman himself, to whom the words were address'd; of these not one seem'd dispos'd at that time to renew the subject; various motives kept them silent; when Claypole, who had probably better dispositions for taking up the conversation, but less matter to support it with than any present, sullenly retired, and left the uncle, niece, and Isabella, to comment upon it as they saw fit.

Sir Roger, who was not yet inform'd of the transaction alluded to by Lady Crowbery, and, to his great surprise, had heard his application answer'd in so different a manner from what he look'd for, saw Claypole leave the room without offering a word either in support of his suit, or which might lead to an explanation of what he did not yet comprehend. Isabella alone knew the real motives of the absent gentleman for the proceeding, which Lady Crowbery resented in this manner, and at the same time foresaw the farther disappointment that was in reserve for him, when he should next have a meeting with his niece. Sir Roger, in the mean time, after some pause, requested to be inform'd by Lady Crowbery, how it was Mr. Claypole had been so unfortunate as to lose her good opinion? This drew from her an account of Henry's generous behaviour in the matter of Blachford's will, and of the sentiments Mr. Claypole had express'd upon that transaction, when he call'd upon Henry at Crowbery. Every circumstance

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circumstance of this was new to the worthy Baronet, who without hesitation, concurred in passing the highest encomiums on our hero, and concluded by saying, that he always suspected his friend Claypole to have a little more attention to the main chance, than was strictly consistent with his own way of thinking.—“Witness,” said he, “his readiness to give up me and my parish for an exchange, which, upon calculation, could not have benefitted him in more than a hundred a year at most, so that, I confess to you, it put me upon computing the price at which he valued the society of an old friend, whose house and heart were ever open to him. After all, perhaps, it may be too much to require of any man, that he should love me better than his money; and as for his advice to our friend Henry, which appears to you so reprehensible, recollecting as I do, how much it was the wish of his heart to marry him to his niece Fanny, I can account for his regret at seeing such a fortune as Mr. Blachford’s slip out of his fingers.”—“Heavens!” exclaimed Lady Crowbery, forgetting herself in the moment of surprise, “had he the assurance to suppose that my Henry would throw himself away upon that flippant flirting thing Fanny Claypole? I’ll venture to pronounce, his heart was never that way disposed; no, no, he has better notions, better taste, and better pretensions.”

The Baronet, though too much a man of honour to expose what had been passing in his house, was yet unwilling to hear his intelligence so totally decried, and turning to his daughter, said, he fancied she could testify there was some truth in what he said: this appeal came rather unseasonably upon Isabella, who had taken to herself the application of some words, which Lady Crowbery

had concluded with, and she simply replied, that Miss Claypole, she believed, would not have been adverse to such a proposal; but she added, incautiously enough, that she was sure no such thing could ever take place.—“Indeed!” cried her father, “are you sure of that? upon what grounds, I beg to know, do you speak so confidently about Henry’s resolutions?”—“Because,” replied Isabella, and here she faltered; but truth was too familiar with her lips to be held back—“because he told me so himself.”

CHAPTER. V.

*Let Innocence beware! Spring-guns and Mantraps
are laid in these Premises!*

WHEN Isabella gave this honest answer to her father’s question, a light struck upon his mind, which some of our readers may think might have reached him before. Accustomed ever to behold her open brow without a cloud, and to hear her speak to him without faltering, the embarrassment that now he could not fail to discover, opened a new train of thoughts, and he instantly pressed fresh questions upon Isabella, which she had too much candour to evade. She told him how she had accidentally dropt in at dame May’s that very morning, where she found Henry.—“And how came he there?” Sir Roger demanded?—“He had hurt his arm, and the good woman was dressing it.”—“And did he tell you of Mr. Claypole’s proposal for his niece, and of his own rejection of her?”—“I understood,” replied

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plied Isabella, "he had an interview with Miss Claypole, which had been conclusive against any further correspondence or connection."—"And how was you interested," demanded he, "to be inform'd of that?"—"I shou'd hope," replied Isabella, "that my father does not want to search into my thoughts, as suspecting they conceal what ought not to be there."—This apostrophe, and perhaps the presence of Lady Crowbery, checked for a time the curiosity of Sir Roger; Zachary also helped to turn the subject, by coming in with a medicine he had been preparing for his patient.

The reverend Mr. Claypole, who had left the room upon his rebuff from the lady patroness of Ratcliffe's living, had gone straight to the vicarage in quest of his niece: here he was greeted, not with the sight of Fanny, but of Fanny's letter, put into his hands by the old woman of the house, who informed him that the young lady had taken her departure early in the morning. This letter briefly told him, that she had for ever taken leave of a place that was rendered odious to her by the treatment she had met in it; that she made no doubt stories would be circulated disreputable to her character, but they could be nothing but the basest forgeries, which she conjured him to treat with the contempt they merited; that she had discovered the young man, he thought so well of, to be half knave half fool, and, for her part, she had done with him; she added, that he had frightened her into fits by his awkwardness, in letting a knife, which she had used for cutting open the leaves of a book, run into his arm, and wound him. In conclusion, she apologized for the early hour of her departure which prevented her from taking leave of him; but

but he should hear from her when she arrived in London.

Claypole's breast now boiled with indignation against Henry; he had disgraced his niece, and, which was worse, disappointed him of a valuable living; for he was too well informed, not to know that Ratchiffe had left it in a state that would bear a deal of stretching. In this temper of mind he fauntered slowly towards Sir Roger's, deeply meditating by the way: the baronet was no less eager for the meeting than he was, and having slept out of the room when Zachary entered in, encountered him in the hall. Claypole was full charged with venom he had brooded upon by the way; "I thank you, dear and worthy Sir," said he, with counterfeited humility, "for your kind though ineffectual intercession in my favour. Having heard a character of myself so contrary to what I expected or deserved, I hope you will not think me petulant, if I beg leave to retire to my chamber for this evening, rather than meet the eyes of a lady, which had not us'd to look so unfavourably upon me, and for whom I entertain too high a reverence and esteem, to be indifferent to her contempt of me. Perhaps, Sir, you may have thought, as Lady Crowbery does, that this young man's conduct in Blachford's business is an act of high honour, and that I was a very shabby fellow to advise him otherwise."—"I don't quite say that," replied Sir Roger gravely; "because I believe you thought of him as likely to be a part of the family; but I confess to you the transaction, as represented to me, appears a very honourable one on his part."—"His motives must determine that," said Claypole; "it is a cheap way of doing a seemingly disinterested action when he gains the favour of Lady Crowbery, and the

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the good opinion of Miss Manstock." Sir Roger started. "I own," continued he, "that I did zealously press forward a marriage, in which I did not altogether wish to make so total a sacrifice of my niece, as to marry her to absolute beggary, but recommended him to reserve some portion of Mr. Blachford's property as a maintenance: this is the mercenary advice for which I am condemn'd; but, with humble submission to Lady Crowbery, I am of opinion I was sufficiently disinterested, when I promoted a marriage even upon these terms, and which I shou'd not have listen'd to for a moment upon any, had I not been persuaded that by taking the danger of an obscure unpromising connection on myself, I was fulfilling the duties of gratitude and friendship, by consulting the interests of my patron and benefactor, in the most essential object of his life." Here Sir Roger again made a motion expressive of agitation and surprise. "And now, Sir," added he, "if I, who have been so long honour'd with your friendship, and so much profited by your hospitality, have appeared to you as a man insensible to your bounty and my own happiness, and one who, upon mercenary motives, was reaching after a better benefice in a distant place, I hope you will now discern my motives, and acquit me of such folly, and such ingratitude, as wou'd stamp my conduct, upon any other principles than the real ones; for, in the first place, what cou'd I profit by the exchange, granting that Mr. Ratcliffe's living were somewhat better than my own, a fact which I have not been curious to enquire into: but be the advantage what it may, surely it wou'd not balance the difference between living upon my own establishment, and appertaining to your's; but when I foresaw, with grief of heart, that
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whether this young nameless fellow married, or married not, my Fanny Claypole, my station in this family had no lasting tenure, consistently with your repose or my own, can you wonder that I caught at any hope that offer'd me an opportunity of retreating in good time, without disturbing your peace at my departure, content that you shou'd even condemn me for the measure, rather than be driven, as I now am, to open your eyes upon the real motives for it?"

"Mr. Claypole," said Sir Roger, no longer able to refrain himself, "you do indeed open my eyes, which have been in darkness; but I must desire you will also enable them to see clearly all the danger that is before them, else, permit me to observe, that your friendship only goes the length of alarming me, but stops short where it shou'd inform me."—"Sir Roger Manstock," replied Claypole, in a tone of much solemnity, "after the proof I have given how far my attachment has already carried me, I shou'd hope you will not suppose it likely to stop short, or shrink from any duties friendship can require of me. If this young adventurer had carried off my niece, I shou'd have held myself justified in serving you so far, and shou'd have seceded from your family in silence; for where wou'd have been the kindness or use in opening your eyes upon dangers, after you had escap'd them? You would then, perhaps, have set me down in your thoughts for a capricious, fickle minded man; but my conscience would have witness'd better things. But now that this Mr. Henry Fitzhenry, or whatever name he chuses to be call'd by, has thought fit to reject Miss Claypole, with fifteen thousand pounds to her fortune, and my honest attempt is defeated, with the sacrifice of my niece's peace

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and reputation, whilst he is extoll'd to the skies, for his rejection both of her generous offer and Blachford's liberal bequest, what am I to think, but that he has friends in those who so highly praise him, who are too well disposed to reward him for sacrificing my connection, and to ruin me in your esteem, (of which design I think you have already had some proof) for my attempt to take upon myself your danger, and defeat their wishes ! And now, Sir Roger, let me make one serious condition with you in this place ; consent to drop this matter for the present ; Lady Crowbery is your guest for this night ; separate not yourself any longer from her, I beseech you ; change not, if possible, your countenance, nor abate of your good humour to either of those amiable ladies, who will wonder at your absence, if you do not suffer me to retire immediately. If any question is ask'd, why I do not attend at supper, be pleas'd to let my apology be a slight indisposition : the plea will not offend against the truth, for I am far from well." This said, he took Sir Roger's hand, tenderly pressed it in his, and hastened away.

When he found himself in his chamber, he again took out his niece's letter, and then for the first time discovered that there was a postscript over leaf, which he had overlooked in his first reading, there being no reference to it. The purport was as follows :—

" The Gentleman took up his abode last night
 " with Mother May, a good commodious body,
 " as you will confess, if you find, upon enquiry,
 " that the immaculate Isabella shall have given
 " him the meeting there (if she did, let Sir Roger
 " look about him) ; I can take upon me to assure
 " you she is fond of him ; and it is my opinion, that
 " in spite of all her sanctified airs, she is up to any

“act of desperation love can drive her to. Once more I repeat,—let Sir Roger look about him.”

This postscript, so happily coinciding with his own operations already commenced, determined Claypole to set out immediately upon discoveries. His first wish was to sift Goody May; but of this he soon saw the impolicy, at least of undertaking it in his own person; he therefore bent his steps to his own house, supposing he might get something from the old woman in his service, and with whom his curiosity was not likely to subject him to the same suspicion. Of her he learned no more, than that Henry had been a pretty considerable time alone with Miss Fanny, during which she never entered the room; but that just as he was going, he rung the bell with great vehemence, and upon her coming to it, told her, that her young lady was taken suddenly ill, and charged her to be careful of her, and not leave her; that she did not then discover he was wounded, but was told it by Miss Fanny, who raved, and rambled, and took on at a piteous rate, being in strong hysterics. “As for what she talked about in her fit”——said the old woman. “Tell me what she said in her fit,” quoth Claypole, “it is very material to me to know what she said, and ’tis your duty not to conceal it from me.” The woman then repeated, as well as she could, such of her incoherent sallies, as she could call to mind: they were made up of various passions, breaking out in confused exclamations; sometimes of violent love, at other times of hatred and contempt as violent; some expressions she recollected full of terror for his life, and as if she had accused herself of having murdered him. “At one time,” added the old woman, “I was sorely afraid the poor young lady had been betrayed, and dealt dishonestly by, for she said again and again, that
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he had made a fool of her, and was a bale deceiver; upon that I straitly asked her, if he had taken advantage of her in an unlucky moment, and had his wicked will of her. To this she answered, no, no, with great vehemence; he had deceived her in another way."

—"Well, well," cried Claypole, stopping her, "say no more upon that subject; I am satisfied no real injury has been done to her virtue."—"None, be assur'd," echoed the old Dame, "I'll stake my life upon that, and Mrs. May will certify the same."—"How!" exclaimed he, "Mrs. May will certify! what knows she of the affair?"—"Lack-a-day!" answered she, "I was fain to call in help, for young madam was quite obstreperous; and so as I knew neighbour May was knowing in those cases, I sent away for her, and well it was she came, for she quickly fetch'd her out of her fit, and quiered her."—"Well," resumed Claypole, "and what became of the gentleman?"—"Oh!" cried the old woman, "he took up his lodgings at Mrs. May's, and did not go off next morning till he had seen my Lady Crowthery, who stopt at the door, and took him into the chaise with her, where they sat together, as some of the neighbours tell me, for I know not how long, whilst my Lady's Gentlewoman got out to make room for him; nay and there's more than all that, only belike you will be angry with me for talking to you about matters."—"Not I," quoth Claypole, "I desire you will tell of all matters that you believe or know to be true. Did Miss Manstock come to Goody May's, while the gentleman was there?"—"Aye, did she, as sure as you are in that place alive," said the hag, "and was all alone with him ever so long in the parlour that Madam has deck'd out so finely
for

for a new-comer amongst us, when, as all the neighbours say, she might have found some of her own poor parishioners to bestow it upon, instead of a stranger."—"What's that to the purpose?" said Claypole, peevishly, "go on with your story about Henry and Miss Manstock; are you sure they were in private together?"—"Certain sure," replied she, "for just then I called upon Mrs. May to return her some bottles of stuff, which had not been us'd, and as I was turning into the parlour to the closet where she keeps her drugs, she laid hold of me in a great hurry, telling me I must not go into that room for my life; I, seeing her in such a combustion, strait thought within myself, how that something was going on more than common, and taking no further notice at the time, determined upon peeping in at the window when I went away, and she was out of sight: I did so; God forgive me if I did wrong! and there I saw young Madam and her spark sitting lovingly together; not that I would go to say there was any harm in what they were about; but if ever I saw any thing clearly with these eyes in my life, I saw Madam Isabella, with her head upon the Gentleman's shoulder, and his arm round her waist: Oho! said I to myself, well may our poor young Lady weep and wail at such a rate if these be your false hearted doings."

Well satisfied with the substance of this intelligence, and quick in discerning the advantages of it, Claypole departed.

CHAPTER VI.

Cunning can hold off Detection for a while.

A NATURE like Sir Roger Manstock's was not easily wrought upon by the poison of suspicion towards a character like Isabella's: Confidence, long rooted in strong affection, was not speedily to be shaken; yet his happiness was disturbed, and his spirits depressed. When Henry was spoken of, which he frequently was by Lady Crowbery, he was either silent on the subject, or contrived to pass it off; his looks at the same time were watchfully directed towards his daughter, and the effect of them was very painfully felt. When Lady Crowbery retired for the night, he attended her himself to her chamber, and contrived to take Isabella away with him. The night passed heavily with her, and the next morning afforded no opportunity of being private with her cousin; the sad hour of departure drew near, and though there was not more than time for such friends to take a farewell, which was probably to be their last, nobody dared to speak the word; all parties sat silent; Zachary Cawdle had the consideration to keep out of the way: at last, Lady Crowbery spoke as follows:—

“ I had reserved many things to say to you, my dear uncle, but I perceive too late the fallacy of postponing those things to a time, when the pain of parting occupies the mind to the exclusion of all other thoughts. I shall therefore refer you for them to my letters, if my health enables me to write; if not,

not, you will find a paper inclosed with my will, to be read by you after my death, in which my heart, and all its sorrows, is laid open to your view: be as tender to my memory when I am no more, as you have been kind and generous to me whilst living, and may Heaven reward you for it! if I have offended you in the matter of your application for Mr. Claypole, or in the manner of my treating it in the presence of that gentleman, I am sorry for it; but I cannot revoke my opinion of him, though I suspect it may appear to you as a very harsh one; but this is not the moment for me to prevaricate, impressed as I am with the persuasion, that it is amongst the last I have to pass with you."

"Heaven forbid!" cried the venerable Barometer, and tenderly embraced her. Isabella, weeping, next presented herself, to take her melancholy adieu; Lady Crowbery whispered a few words to her as she was in her arms, and then, with assistance, rose from her chair, and was supported to the carriage, that waited at the door, where all the domestics of Mansstock House were assembled, to offer up their good wishes for her recovery: alas! how fruitless!

Sir Roger retired to his library, Isabella to her apartment. Claypole had kept close, and did not present himself at Lady Crowbery's departure. This was not unnoticed by Sir Roger, who did not expect to meet so strong a mark of his resentment: the solemn declaration made by that lady, under the impression that they were the last words she should address to him in person, sunk deep into his mind—I cannot revoke my opinion of him.—He was not of a nature prone to suspicion, nor had he that gift of intuition, which can discover the real character of a man, by tracing it through the windings and involutions of artifice and cunning.

Claypole,

Claypole, by superior acuteness of intellect, had gained a complete ascendancy over him, and preserved it long; yet he had not a little surprised Sir Roger by his solicitation for Ratcliffe's living; it struck him in the light of a dereliction of his friendship, upon motives merely mercenary; but the artful interpretation afterwards given to those motives had put a very favourable gloss upon it as to Claypole's conduct; but it fatally instilled into his mind a doubt, as to the dearest object of his affections, and for the first time shook his confidence in his beloved Isabella. This was now the painful subject of his meditations; and after opposing thought to thought, and weighing them calmly and impartially to the best of his judgment and understanding, he began to sum up the result of his reflections in the following manner:—

“Lady Crowbery says, she cannot revoke her opinion of Mr. Claypole; neither can I, without better proof than I am yet provided with.—If a small augmentation of his income could have tempted him to turn his back upon me, I should have doubted the sincerity of his friendship; for he does not want money.—But this exchange was not the way to gain it; therefore I am the more disposed to believe the reasons he assigns for seeking it.—He says, he would have given his niece to Henry for my sake, for my repose,—and what can that imply, but that he apprehends me to be in danger; and how in danger? but that he suspects my Isabella to be attached to the young man, whom he would have married to Miss Claypole.—This is indeed alarming; suspicion is always so; but I must not give way to suspicion without proofs; hitherto he has given me none. Isabella confesses that she met him accidentally at the cottage; what then? her very confession of it shou'd disarm suspicion; and

and my child has ever been ingenuous and sincere. Claypole would have me think he took a dangerous connection on himself for my sake: if so, he has had an escape; why then this resentment against Henry for refusing to endanger him? But he was eager enough for the connection when I first conversed with him about it; he sought the young man, unknown to me, conferred with him at Crowbery, and strove to persuade him to avail himself of Blachford's legacy; that could not be for my sake; there is something here that does not seem to accord: I am puzzled how to judge."

At this moment Claypole announced himself with a gentle tap at the library door, and was desired to enter. Sir Roger had well nigh entangled himself in his meditations, and probably was not sorry thus to cut the knot, which he could not untie. "Well, my good friend," said he, with a sigh, "my niece is gone, perhaps for ever: I think you was not present to take leave of her."—My presence, I am afraid," replied Claypole, "could not have been agreeable to her, nor my respects acceptable."—"To me at least they would, if not to her," said Sir Roger.—"To you they never can be wanting," resumed he, "of which this tender of them is my witness, when I am fitter for my bed than to be about."—"I am very sorry you are indisposed," resumed the Baronet, "for I confess to you there was part of your conversation last night which has left my thoughts in a state of great inquietude."—"If that be so," replied Claypole, "I am quite at leisure to satisfy you upon any points you may wish to have explained; clear in conscience, and cordial in my zeal for your interest and content, I can never be taken unprovided with a strait answer to any questions you may choose to ask."—"I cannot doubt you," quoth the Baronet,

"and

“and shall accordingly avail myself of your indulgence. I think you stated the purposed connection with young Henry and Miss Claypole as a dangerous one, but which, nevertheless, you was resolute to encounter upon reasons that had respect to my repose, the nature of which I can well understand.”—“I did so.”—“Did you see it in that light of danger when you first started it in our conversation together in the hall?”—“I do not perfectly call to mind how I saw it, or how I started it upon that occasion; it was a night of bustle and confusion; we had sate long and indulged freely at table.”—“We had so,” rejoined Sir Roger, “yet I remember you embraced it with so much seeming warmth and good liking, that if you was then projecting to make a sacrifice of your own interests to mine, you really masked your motives so effectually, that I was not aware of the concern I had in them.”—“That they were my motives,” said Claypole, “I can truly assert; that you did not discover them might very naturally happen, as I did not study the display of a disinterested action, and cautiously avoided alarming you with danger which I was in hopes to divert from you for ever: but, added to this, might it not happen, that I thought better of the young man at that time than I have done since? I am free to say, notwithstanding Lady Crowbery’s decision against me for my opinion in that case, I did not approve of his romantic heroism in begging himself for Susan May’s bastard: he held a very haughty language to me upon that occasion, and I do not think it became him either to talk or to act as he did in that affair.”—To this Sir Roger replied, “A haughty language did not become him, and a disrespectful one towards a person of your age and character was greatly reprehensible; but as for the act itself, I cannot but regard it as a
very

very honourable one."—"Sir," said Claypole, "these are high-flown fancies; the fellow is a beggar with a fair face and proud stomach; he lives upon charity."—"And that charity will enable him to live," said Sir Roger calmly.—"Scantily I should guess," replied Claypole, "some small provision Lady Crowbery may have made for him in her will, but I should hope her Ladyship will not heap any great matters upon such an one as him to the detriment of your family."—"There, Sir," returned the Baronet, "you are much more zealous for my family than I am myself: my estate is more than sufficient for all my occasions, sure it will suffice to portion one daughter."—"Permit me then," replied Claypole, "to say to you, sir, without offence, that I sincerely hope that daughter will never have any other interest in Lady Crowbery's property but what that lady herself may bequeath to her as Miss Manstock."—"I clearly comprehend you," said Sir Roger, "and as you mean it so I receive it: and now I call upon you as my friend, to tell me, without reserve, upon what proofs you ground your apprehensions of my daughter's attachment to this young man: suspicion is a serious thing; I am persuaded you would not frivolously alarm it: be so good to tell me what you have discovered in Miss Manstock's conduct."—"Pardon me," replied Claypole, "I pretend to take no other part than that of a warning friend; I do not covet the character of an informing spy: let the woman of the cottage be interrogated."—"Not so," said Sir Roger calmly, "let my child, with your leave, be fairly heard before I call witnesses to the charge against her. Let me at least make trial of her sincerity; she has never yet deceived me to my knowledge, and I should be loth to take a secret course with her; and now as you have

have, with so much friendly zeal, made my repose and the honour of my family your own concern, let me request you will be present whilst I ask a few questions of my daughter as from myself." Claypole instantly started from his seat, and resolutely protested against such a proposal, saying that he had no desire to be made a party in family disputes, either by being set up as an umpire between father and daughter, or called to the indelicate office of deposing against a young lady; he had spoken his fears in the way of caution; if they were investigated, he did not doubt but they would be found not to have been lightly taken up, but he confessed he had not sufficient firmness to assert them to the face of so fair a lady. This said, he left the room.

CHAPTER VII.

*Let the Man, who suspects, resort speedily to
Explanation.*

"CAN this be pure friendship?" said Sir Roger within himself, as Claypole parted from him; "I am willing to hope it is, but I can hardly think it has all the characteristics of it." He now went up stairs to his daughter's dressing-room, where he found her alone; she had been weeping, and was sitting in a pensive posture without any employment. He approached her gently, for sorrow claims respect, and in a tender tone he said, "You have been in tears, my child; but I cannot wonder at it, 'tis an affecting trial to take leave of so dear a friend with so little hope of ever meeting again. I feel it deeply too; I believe my affliction is as heavy as your own."—

"I hope

“I hope not,” replied Isabella, “because I am afraid I have more losses than one to aggravate my affliction.”—Of what loss do you complain besides this of Lady Crowbery?” said he, in the accent of alarm.—“Of the loss of your confidence Sir,” returned she, looking up in his face with conscious innocence. The appeal was irresistible; the most hardened tyrant would have felt it; how could it fail to touch the tender heart of so affectionate a father? “Not so, my child,” said he; “you have not lost my confidence, you will not lose it; you will merit an increase of it, your candour will confirm and fix it beyond the reach of doubt for ever after,”—“In truth,” she replied, “my heart is exactly as nature and you have made it; it is conscious of no guilt, and I have taught it no disguise; prove it therefore and examine it; tell me all that you suspect, all that has been reported to you, all that your own fears suggest, and leave no particle unsifted, for never can I be happy whilst any doubt remains to cloud that countenance which hitherto has smil’d upon me so serenely.”—“’Tis spoken like yourself,” said the father, his countenance brightening as he said it; “and now, my dear, I shou’d be glad to know, provided you can tell me with honour to Lady Crowbery, what it was she said to you in a whisper when you took leave of each other.”—“Readily,” answered Isabella; “and the rather because it was advice that does her credit, tho’ in justice to myself I must add, I did not then stand in need of it. She had observ’d you was startled at my meeting Henry at the cottage, she suspected Mr. Claypole had been alarming you on the subject, and she advis’d me to be sincere in relating to you every thing that pass’d between us: this was the purport of what she whisper’d

to

to me, and this I am now most perfectly ready to fulfil."

Here it may be proper to inform our readers, that Isabella in this statement reported truly as far as she went, but candour, it is hoped, will acquit her if she did not betray what was further divulged to her in strict secrecy; for in that parting moment Lady Crowbery, impressed with a sad presentiment that she should never see her more, had imparted to her the mystery of Henry's birth, avowing him to be her son by Captain Delapoer, and informing her that she had made him her heir.

In return for this candid tender Sir Roger observed, that it was not merely the circumstance of her meeting Henry, and conversing with him without a third person present that gave him alarm; that must have often happened whilst he was a visitor in his house; but in this business there was a seeming secrecy and mysteriousness in their meeting that gave it the air of a concerted assignation; that his sudden departure without a word said or written to him by way of farewell favoured that appearance; and he added, that he could not well account for his declining a connection every way so flattering and so advantageous to a person in his circumstance as that with Miss Claypole, any otherwise than as having an attachment elsewhere.

In answer to this Isabella assured him, that her meeting with Henry at the cottage was purely accidental: he had a wound which broke out afresh whilst she was there and bled profusely: she staid with him whilst it was dressed; it was a deep stab in the arm: she remained some time after it was stanch'd, and they were left to themselves; he then told her that his treaty with Miss Claypole

pole was broken off; the reasons for it he did not tell, but he certainly did not speak of it with any regret, nor did she believe he had ever considered it either as an advantageous or agreeable connection. As to her father's observation, that he had not communicated with him in any manner, she said she could only ascribe that to his fear of being questioned about his wound, of which she found him very unwilling to give any other account than in general terms as an accident, and even this she observed was unpleasant to him to speak of. "Did he come wounded from his interview with Fanny Claypole?"—"She believed he did."—"Then he got it there."—"She understood so."

Sir Roger pondered upon this for some time in silence; he then renewed the conversation in the following manner: "This is a dark business, Habella: Fanny Claypole is a girl of a violent temper; as for Henry, I should be unjust if I did not bear testimony to his good principles as far as I have had experience of them: his person, manners and behaviour are highly impressive; the situation in which I found him, the unjust treatment he had suffer'd, and his deportment under it, prejudic'd me strongly in his favour; my niece Crowbery's protection in the first instance was natural, as considering him the cleve of Ratcliffe and undeservedly distress'd: I warmly coincided with it: it afterwards grew more ardent, I was alarm'd at it; it now is become mysterious, and I cannot understand it. When I invited him into my house I did not forget that I possess'd a beautiful daughter, the heiress of my fortune and the darling of my soul; but such was the distance of your conditions from each other, such my confidence in your discretion, and my opinion of his proper understanding of himself, that I own to you I fore-

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saw no danger, and let me hope I have incur'd none. But if my confidence has led me into error, or he, mistaking your pity for encouragement, has been rash enough to attempt your affections, it is now high time that I endeavour to repair that error by calling you to a recollection of yourself and me."

"And what," she demanded, "wou'd my father prescribe to me for his future assurance and content?"

"I wou'd have you keep in mind," he replied, "that I exact no other rights than nature has endow'd me with, when I require you, if ever you entertain'd a thought of this young man, to call to mind now in good time my solemn declaration, that I never will admit of your connection with a man so circumstanc'd: I never wish to force your inclinations, have no unreasonable ambition to ally you to great rank or overgrown estate; but to absolute obscurity, to mystery, to an unknown creature, parentless and nameless, I cannot, will not sacrifice my child."

"How just and reasonable," said she, "is that denunciation! I seal it with my promise faithfully to adhere to it."

"Take notice," added the father, "that Blachford's whole possessions cou'd have made no change in my resolves, nor been of any avail to him, as he is."

"I understand it perfectly," she said, "he must be known; his history must be develop'd and his parentage clearly ascertain'd. Shou'd time bring that to light, and set him forth to view as unexceptionable in birth and condition as he is amiable in character and manners, may I not presume my father wou'd relax?"—"Stop there," he cried, "nor cherish such delusions, which will only prove
you

you have him more at heart than I cou'd wish. Alas! alas! my child, I fear your eyes have led your understanding astray; I doubt, Isabella, you are captivated by what the worst as well as the best, the meanest as well as the most noble may present to you, a handsome person."—"Surely, my dear Sir," said Isabella blushing, "you just now spoke with approbation of his principles."

"I did so," he replied, "and I will not unsay it. He has done generous actions, noble ones, that wou'd extort applause even from his enemy, which I am not."

"But he has enemies," she rejoined; "at least there are some minds so hostile to merit, or so perverted by malice, as to allow him no applause."

"I grant you," replied Sir Roger; "but Claypole is angry with him for refusing his niece."

"Ah, Sir!" returned the lovely Isabella, "then Henry, I fear, will soon experience the effects of his anger."

"That wou'd be hard," Sir Roger observed, "as he suspected he had received one wound from the family already."

"But there are deeper and more fatal wounds than he has yet felt," said Isabella, "that he has still to apprehend; I have reason to believe that a stab in your opinion, wou'd afflict him more than any thing his flesh can suffer."

"Come, come," said the worthy Baronet with a parental smile, "Henry may have enemies, but I perceive he has one steady friend, and that friend has great power, for she is very near my heart."

With these words he rose from his seat approached her with a gentle aspect, and, having impressed a kiss upon her forehead, departed.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VIII.

*She, who confesses less than the Whole, may save a
Blush, but will incur a Danger.*

ISABELLA found the anguish of her mind allayed by the preceding conversation with her father; it had not totally extinguished it. There were still some tender incidents belonging to her interview with Henry, which remained untold; yet upon reflection she could hardly be persuaded, to attach any degree of self reproach to the omission of such incidents in her narrative, as it was next to impossible to convey by any form of words the delicacy of those circumstances which introduced, and the purity of those sensations which admitted these chaste and innocent endearments. How could she find expressions that would describe what was passing in the mind of Henry, when starting from his reverie on her sudden appearance in his room, he wildly ran and caught her in his arms, unmindful of his wound that burst instantly open? In the like degree language would have failed her to impress him with a just conception of those soft but guiltless emotions, occasioned by the sight of the blood flowing from his wound, by the tenderness of his looks, his language, and the mixt assemblage of enervating ideas at the touching crisis of departure, which had caused her to sink under a momentary oppression of spirits, whilst he supported her in his arms. This she despaired to paint in terms that could exemplify a scene, which nothing but the manner of it could

justify, and none but a spectator could completely understand.

Therefore it was that her ingenuous nature found a plea in its own want of powers for letting these small incidents remain untold, and who that has a heart, which love or pity ever touched, but will subscribe a wish that they had been unseen?

In the next conversation that took place between Claypole and Sir Roger, the latter repeated the substance of what had passed between himself and his daughter; expressing his entire satisfaction in the result of it, and declaring in the joy of his heart, that he was now perfectly at ease with respect to his late alarm, about the interview at the cottage. Claypole affected to receive this account with pleasure, saying he was very glad he had taken that method of investigation, which made the quickest dispatch in dismissing his uneasiness; happiness, he observed, was worth obtaining even by delusion, and for that reason he would recommend to him to sit down contented with the account he had received, though it was from the party concerned, and not expose himself to the risque of future inquietude by investigating the affair any further, or seeking after witnesses whose accounts might perhaps perplex him, by differing in some particulars from that which had been so satisfactory. He then with an air of indifference turned the discourse to some other subject and left his observation to work as it might, or might not, within the mind of his friend to whom he addressed it.

The next day Ezekiel Daw walked over from Crowbery, upon a visit to his friend Dame May at the cottage, bearing a kind message from her daughter, and inviting her to take up her abode with her at the deceased Mr. Blachford's house, where

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where, by advice of her friends, she purposed to establish herself and the infant heir. He was also encharged by Susan to apologize on her behalf, in the most respectful terms, to Miss Manstock, for her not paying her duty in person, and with other small commissions to be settled with the servants. This brought him to the great house, after halting on his way at the widow's, and his arrival was announced to Isabella, as she was in company with her father and Mr. Claypole. She would fain have left the room to attend upon him, but the thought struck Sir Roger to have him introduced to the parlour, declaring that he was not only greatly taken with the oddity of his character, but that he esteemed him as a very upright honest creature.

Ezekiel made his advances in a respectful manner to the worthy Baronet, and was by him very kindly welcomed to Manstock House. He acquitted himself of his commission to the young lady after his manner properly enough, and then made an effort to take leave, but was stayed by a question from Sir Roger, relative to the amount of what Mr. Blachford had bequeathed to his heir: Ezekiel said that it consisted of property in Jamaica, which returned about two thousand pounds one year with another, as far as he could understand, with about ten thousand pounds in money, and the small estate at Crowbery; but he desired not to be understood as speaking correctly. Sir Roger said in an under-voice to Claypole,—“It is not so much as I guessed he was possessed of, but it is a great deal for a poor man to give up upon principle.” He then enquired if there were any legacies: Ezekiel informed him there were a few; upon which Claypole said,—“I suppose you have got a legacy, sir;—” “No, reverend sir,” replied

the good man, "I have no legacy, nor did I covet one; it fits not the servant of Christ to be greedy after gain."—"Then I suppose," resumed he, "that it was by your advice Mr. Fitzhenry declined his legacy;"—"Not so, sir," replied Ezekiel, "the first I heard of it was just before you came into my poor cottage, when, if I mistake not, you disapprov'd of that act, which in my humble opinion was a very meritorious one: but it is not by the praise or dispraise of men that actions can be truly tried; Heaven knows that excellent young man hath receiv'd little else but unjust judgment upon earth, and evil treatment from cruel hands. Even now he is gone forth to sea most barbarously wounded."—"Do you pretend to know then," said Claypole, "how he got that wound?"—"Yes, reverend sir," replied Ezekiel, rising in his tone, "I do pretend to know."—"Stop there, Mr. Daw," cried Isabella, hastily interposing, "I dare say your absent friend wou'd not wish you to speak of that affair in this company, or any other; I beseech you say no more upon the subject."—"Lady, I obey," answered Ezekiel, "and verily I am beholden to you for your timely counsel." Silence now ensuing, honest Daw made his bow and retired.

"Pray, madam," said Claypole, "may I ask without offence why you stopp'd that man's answer to a question, which I who put it to him had a right to expect, and no repugnance to meet?"—"Because I am persuaded," replied Isabella, "he had received no account of the transaction from the person who received the wound, and I think it was both dangerous and improper for him to speak upon any other authority."—"Suffer me to observe," said he, "that I do not see the justice of saving any man from the danger of a malicious story, when it is clear he has the propensity to publish it. Had he been suffered to proceed, we might

might have been led through the medium of falsehood to the investigation of truth, and I might have had a fair opportunity of vindicating the character of my niece, as well as of punishing the wickedness of her defamers. But I perceive Ezekiel Daw, the itinerant preacher, is considered by you as a sacred person; and under your shield, Madam, how can it be expected that my arm can reach him, or indeed be raised against him? I perceive, Madam, there is a design to propagate a most villainous story, and to affix a murderous intent upon a matter of mere accident. When the wounded gentleman got his hurt, nobody was present but my niece; I am at a loss, therefore, to think from whom else this evil report should originate but from him." To this Isabella steadily replied, "Whatever term you may affix to the report, I dare say it did not spring from him, if indeed it be an evil one it could not."—"Then, Madam," replied Claypole, "we must lay it at the door of some tattling gossip, who, gathering some expressions from the terrified imagination of my niece, when the sight of the accident had thrown her into fits, founded this malicious interpretation of it; and if that be all, I am sure the wisest way is to disregard it; for in truth their silly fables merit nothing but contempt; they pretend to hear things that were never said, and to see things that probably were never done, and then they fasten their fictions upon you and upon Henry, and perhaps upon every one of us in our turn."—"What do they fasten upon me, may I ask?" demanded Isabella.—"What I paid little or no attention to when I heard it, yet it serves to shew how ingenious they are in their idle devices not to let the purest character escape their tongues; what wonder then if their scandal is busy with my poor niece?"—"There is a mysteriousness in this story,"

story," said Sir Roger, "and I think all such shou'd be fairly produced with their authors, especially where a lady's name is made use of."—"I am clearly of that opinion," replied Claypole, "and I hold it to be a duty which I owe to you, to this amiable young lady, and to truth itself, not to let any report affecting her enter my ears without giving up both it and the author, whom I am the less inclined to screen because she belongs to me for the present; and as I am persuaded Miss Manstock can confute her tale, I shall instantly proceed to punish her by a dismissal from my service, and sorry I shall be that my power reaches no farther."—"This is perfectly candid in you," said Sir Roger, "and what I should expect from your friendship; but without more delay let us hear the story; I will venture to say my daughter has no objection to hearing it."—"None in life," replied she, "if Mr. Claypole has none to the relation of it; but indeed he has now gone too far to suppress it."

"It is soon told, Madam," said Claypole, "and I doubt not as soon confuted; but my foolish old woman at the vicarage pretends to say, that calling upon the widow May whilst you and Mr. Fitzhenry were together, she was prevented from entering the room where you were, with so much appearance of alarm on the part of the good woman who guarded the door, that suspecting there was a secret, and naturally curious, as such silly old gossips are apt to be, she took her opportunity of peeping in at the window, and discovered you in an attitude (impossible upon the face of it!) for the impudent hussey says she saw him with his arm round your waist, and your head reclining upon his shoulder."—"How's that?" cried Sir Roger with vehemence, starting at the same moment on his legs,

legs, "does the infamous trollop say that? I'll have her taken up and committed to the house of correction."—"No, Sir," said Isabella, "sinking as I was under my alarm at the bloody spectacle I had been surveying, I can still recollect too much of my situation at that moment not to remember that there was a person came up to the window whilst Henry was supporting me, and if this is the person she says no more than the truth, which Mr. Claypole has very faithfully reported, with what intent he best knows, but justice compels me to say that correction is not due to the woman." There was an air of so much conscious innocence in Isabella's ready explanation and confession, that Claypole instantly perceived he had missed his aim in her particular at least, but in Sir Roger he had lodged his shaft. A strict observer of decorum in all its antiquated rigour, he only looked to consequences, not to cause; it was enough for him to know his daughter had submitted to the embrace of this young man, and that she had been a spectacle for vulgar eyes in that degrading situation; it struck him with a painful recollection, that she had suppressed this circumstance in the account she had given him at first; and turning a severe look to his daughter, he said, "Isabella, you never see that young man again whilst you live; at least within my doors never. You have deceived me, child, for the first time: you have concealed from me a fact, whilst you made me believe you had ingenuously related the whole of what passed between you. You have been discovered in a situation unfit for you to be seen in by a peasant in the parish, who, having gratified her own curiosity, will not spare to gratify the curiosity of others, and the tale will be circulated through the neighbourhood, to your shame and to mine."

To

To this our heroine instantly replied as follows:—“When I assure my father that such was the state of my nerves at the time I was discovered in the situation Mr. Claypole has been describing, that I must have sunk upon the floor, had not Henry prevented it, I flatter myself I shall not be thought guilty of any great offence against propriety in accepting of his support, neither, perhaps, can he be justly condemned for giving it. I hope I have not hitherto been found so disingenuous as not to deserve credit for what I assert, nor so suppliant as to be thought capable of throwing myself voluntarily into any man’s arms. The sight of a deep and terrible wound streaming with blood upon the floor, and the assistance that humanity compelled me to give in stanching the wound, was a scene so new and alarming to me that my spirits could not stand against it. I confess to you I suppressed this circumstance in my discourse with you, but I had motives for so doing which did not spring from any consciousness of guilt or dread of explanation on my own part: my silence had respect to others, not to myself; and the same motives that led me to stop Ezekiel Daw just now from speaking on this subject, operated with me, and will operate, for avoiding as far as is in my power any mention of that affair.” She then turned to Mr. Claypole, and, in a calm, unembarrassed accent, said, “You will now perceive, that your foolish old woman, as you call her, has done nothing to incur your displeasure, or to merit the punishment you threaten her with; she had only the curiosity to peep in at a window, and seems to have related to you, very faithfully, what she discovered, which you, Sir, as faithfully have related to my father; this, no doubt, you did in the pure spirit of friendship to my father; and I have only to say, for his
fate,

fake, that I hope this will be the last proof of your friendship, accompanied with pain to him, and that every subsequent one will communicate nothing but pleasure. You have, however, told him something which I had not told him, and so far I am made to appear evasive and disingenuous; but I have given you the clue to my exculpation, and, if you have a mind to pursue it, you will be led to the clear understanding of my motives. I am willing to interpret the part you have taken as meant for my good; and, indeed, if I have been guilty of thinking more favourably of this mysterious young man, than you conceive I ought to think, your measures have been so far crowned with success, that you have had the satisfaction to hear my father declare, that I am never again to see that person whilst I live, at least within his doors. To this I answer, I have never yet disobeyed my father's commands, nor ever will; let him therefore repeat that solemn denunciation again, and here I am ready as solemnly to pledge myself to the observance of it, let it cost me what it will. I desire to live but to please him, and only whilst I please him; and tho' I don't wish to hold back the very high opinion I entertain of this proscribed young man, (or, if you please to give it any other name that purity may acknowledge, I will confess to that) yet I now declare, I will never hereafter hold correspondence, direct or indirect, with him, unless it shall be with the privacy and consent, nay, even by the requisition and desire, of my father himself. This, Sir, I presume, will satisfy you, if you are sincerely bent to oppose my attachment; and if my dear father is truly desirous to interdict it, he will, I dare say, confide in what I have promised."

CHAPTER IX.

A tempting Offer honourably withstood.

TO this defence Claypole made no reply, neither did Sir Roger seem in haste to speak; for the gust of anger, which artifice had raised, innocence and truth had now dispelled. He turned his eyes upon the accuser first, and then upon his daughter; each look was decisive to the party it was addressed to; neither of them stood in need of any further explanation of the opinion he entertained; at last, turning to Claypole, he said, "I think, Sir, it had been better for us both if you had not listen'd to this eaves-dropper; for it appears to me, that you have gather'd nothing from her information, but what my Isabella has very naturally accounted for.—"It is very well," replied Claypole; "I know the consequences of over zealous friendship, and none can accrue to me, which I am not prepar'd for." With these words he left the room.

"He is very angry," said Sir Roger; "but his disappointments vex him: rebuff'd by Lady Crowbery, rebuff'd by Henry, and tormented with his niece, his vexations have follow'd close upon one another; we must make allowances for men's tempers, and Claypole's is not the most patient, therefore let it pass; we'll say no more of him: and now, my child, a word or two with you upon what is nearest to my heart—your happiness, and a right understanding betwixt us. It is clear to me, Isabella, that you are attach'd to this young unknown; that is a very serious thing, truly; for who is he, and what is he? If you can
answer

answer to these points, explain to me, satisfy me. I am not greedy of wealth, I am not ambitious of titles for you; but the character and condition of a gentleman is an indispensable requisite in the person of my son-in law; I cannot away with obscurity or meanness; therefore, if you know any thing of Henry, tell it to me; 'tis your own concern, and, if a secret, I will not reveal it."

"I am sure you wou'd not," replied she; "and was a secret imparted to me, under strict injunctions to keep it inviolable, I am no less sure, you wou'd hold me base, shou'd I reveal it; I hope, therefore, you will not regard it as a breach of duty, if I decline an answer to your question."

"Hold there," replied the father; "I am apt to think it is a part of your duty to take no secrets into your trust in which I am not to share, especially when they are committed to you by a young man like Henry."—"But if I have it not from him," said she, "the case does not apply."

"No matter," rejoined he; "it is of him, it relates to him, and that's reason enough why I shou'd know it. In one word, Isabella, give me up the matter of your information without the author of it, and if it appears, to my satisfaction, that this young man is by birth a gentleman, and such as I can with propriety adopt into my family, I pass my word to you, that I will no longer oppose myself to your inclinations, for his character and manners please me, and I can well believe his person not less engaging; but if you will not confide to me what you know of this young man, I shall take for granted it is not fit to be known, and, in that persuasion, exert the authority of a father for laying my injunctions upon you, never to let me see his face, or hear his

his name again; neither shall I forgive you, if I discover that you carry on any correspondence with him, or about him. This, Isabella, is your alternative; now take your choice, and the consequences of your choice."

A stronger temptation than was now offered to Isabella could hardly present itself; but her steady nature rejected it without scruple, and, by persisting in her good faith to Lady Crowbery, she incurred, to her infinite regret, the displeasure of her father, most tenderly belov'd: the conference, therefore, concluded in anger on his part, and in a solemn promise on her's, to hold no correspondence with Henry, nor, even through her cousin Lady Crowbery, about him in future. Time, it is true, might probably develope the mystery which her honour would not suffer her to do, and to that alone she trusted for a justification of her silence, both towards her father and her lover.

The Rev. Mr. Claypole, meanwhile, betook himself in sullen discontent to his chamber, there to meditate upon future measures: in the interim, a letter was delivered to him, which had come by special messenger from Crowbery Castle, the contents of which were as follows:—

"My dear Uncle,

"In consequence of a most polite invitation
 "from the worthy Lord of this castle, I have been
 "prevail'd upon to take up my abode here for a few
 "days. The chief inducement with me for accep-
 "ting this solicitation was, the opportunity it af-
 "fords me of being within reach of my dear uncle,
 "without the pain of taking up my residence in
 "the same place with a family from whom I have
 "received the most unhandsome treatment. No-
 "thing can exceed the kindness and attention of
 "Lord Crowbery, and I am charged by him, in
 "the

“the most earnest manner, to request the favour
“of your company at the Castle: I am sure you
“will not regret the change from Manstock House;
“and, if I have any interest with you, his request
“will be complied with, the rather as I find my-
“self, in Lady Crowbery’s absence, in a situation
“to stand in need of your cover and protection, be-
“ing at present the only female visitor in the house.

“I am, ever your’s,

“FRANCES CLAYPOLE.”

Nothing could be more acceptable to Mr. Claypole, in his present state of mind, than the invitation which this letter conveyed; it relieved him from a situation, of which he was heartily sick, and offered him the gratification of putting a slight upon Lady Crowbery, of the most pointed sort: he well knew how it would be felt by Sir Roger Manstock, and on that very account he embraced it the more readily; for there was no longer any trace of past favours in his memory, and of favours to come all expectation was at an end. He had, however, views upon futurity in Lord Crowbery’s particular; for he had seen enough of Lady Crowbery, to set her down, in his account, as a dead woman, and his niece Fanny was a very lively one. He had more than once taken her with him to the castle, in times when better harmony subsisted between the families, and on those visits Fanny had made her way much better with the lord than with the lady of the house, with the latter of whom, to say the truth, she was in no great favour. The fact was, that Lady Crowbery regarded her character with contempt, and Fanny imputed it to jealousy; to rouse this passion was a gratification too agreeable to be resisted, and therefore, though his Lordship was nothing less than an Adonis, there was amusement at least in the experiment, and she considered it as no small triumph

umph to engage the attention of a man, who was capable of neglecting a most lovely woman, and devoting himself to her. Her purpose in hastening from the vicarage, in the manner we have related, was with the view of obtaining one more interview with Henry, or, at least, of gaining such intelligence as might satisfy her as to the consequences of his wound; she therefore boldly shaped her course towards the port he was to embark at, but in passing through the village of Crowbery, luckily fell in with the noble proprietor, who was cheering his spirits with a morning ride, in his lady's absence, and, after some importunity, prevailed upon her to stop short in her progress, and repose herself in the castle. Here she remained some time, till propriety, or something else, dictated to her the expedient of writing to her uncle in manner above related, to which his Lordship, with equal propriety, very courteously acceded.

Sir Roger Manstock, who perceived that his daughter was in possession of a secret that he could not extort from her, concluded, very naturally, that it came from Lady Crowbery; and this brought to his recollection, what she had said to him upon their parting, relative to the paper she had inclosed under the same cover with her will, to be opened after her death. This packet he had deposited in his strong box; it was under four seals, and evidently enveloped more papers than one: he had no doubt, from Isabella's answers, that the secret she had in charge from Lady Crowbery related to Henry's birth, and that it would be discovered upon the opening of this packet. He could not reconcile to himself the being excluded from a confidence which had been reposed in his daughter, and was not a little discontented to find, that his niece had referred him to her death for a discovery that she had already made to Isabella.

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He now summoned Isabella to him, and holding Lady Crowbery's packet in his hand, addressed himself to her as follows :—" I am here entrusted with a paper, sealed as you see, containing your cousin's will, and other private matters, which are only to be opened by me upon the event of her death: I have no doubt but it incloses a discovery of that very secret, which she has already imparted to you, and that it refers to the mystery of this young man's birth, who has caused so much unhappiness to me and my family. I understand withal, that I am to be the executor of this will, and, most probably, of certain instructions and trusts relative to the gentleman, who is then, for the first time, to be made known to me. Now these are terms that I will not agree to; I am no dealer in obscure matters, and it is therefore become my fixt resolution peremptorily to decline the commission, and so to inform Lady Crowbery, by special express, unless you are prepared to tell me what it is you know of these secret contents, so far as they relate to the person called Henry Fitz-Henry; for I do not hold it becoming me, in any respect, to be surpris'd into a trust that may involve me with a person whom at present I have every reason to hold at distance, and for whom, perhaps, I may never choose to be concerned, even in the most trifling degree. Now then, Isabella, let me ask you, if what I have been saying seems reasonable, and whether you rightly comprehend it?" To this she replied in the affirmative; upon which he thus proceeded :—" If it is reasonable then that I should not be blindly committed in a business I am ignorant of, and if you are interested to retain these papers in my hands, rather than to have them sent back to her from whom they came, you have the alternative at your choice

choice; tell me what you know of them, or take the consequences, and abide by the promise you have made me: never let me hear the name of Henry Fitz-Henry from your lips any more."

"If that be the alternative," replied the lovely Isabella whilst the tears started in her eyes, "necessity imposes the hard task upon me of abiding by the painful consequences you have stated. Can I violate my promise? Ought not every trust to be held sacred? This is of all most sacred, and I dare not betray it. Let me then, for the last time in your hearing, declare, that wherever this discarded person, whose name I will not utter in your ears, shall betake himself, he carries with him, to the end of life, my prayers, my blessings, my unalienable affections, and my heart for ever; but let not this ingenuous confession of my love shake your confidence in my honour, for upon my knees I take to witness truth, and Heaven itself, that I will faithfully perform the promise I have made you, and, renouncing him, devote myself to your commands and to my duty."

CHAPTER X.

*Where is the Daughter, that may not take a Lesson
from our Heroine?*

THE definitive answer, which our last chapter concludes with, put a period to any further conference between the respective parties, and determined Sir Roger Manstock to take the very measure he had threatened to pursue. He immediately wrote a letter to his niece, explanatory of his sensations with respect to Henry, and beseeching

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ing her to excuse him from any trust that had relation to a person, who had caused him such uneasiness, and whom he was determined never to be connected with: he also informed her of the promise made to him by his daughter, and prayed her to send down a trusty person, properly authorized, into whose hands he might safely render back the packet she had entrusted to him: he then concluded in the most conciliating terms that his tenderness could suggest, wishing her a return of health, and assuring her of his unalterable affection.

A servant was ordered to set off express with this letter, who had directions where to find the lady in town, if he did not overtake her on the road, of which, however, there was the greatest probability, as her daily stages were very short.

In the mean time our amiable heroine did not, like some others, dedicate every hour to sullen silence and continual melancholy; for though her private moments were sad enough, she had yet a smile for her father when they met, and the same eyes that showered tears in secret, reassumed their native cheerful lustre when her parent was in sight.

Not so the Reverend Mr. Claypole; there was something in his breast resembling those goads and stings which disappointed malice or ambition sometimes entertain themselves with in secret, in the way of penance for attempts which conscience does not quite approve of. He was indeed superior to that tergiversation and incertitude of purpose, which consciences over nice sometimes impose upon resolutions not over strong; for he was firmly resolved to turn his back upon his old friend, and his face towards his new one; but he could not quite persuade himself that such a resolve had all the qualities of a virtuous purpose; for he could not but feel that he ought to be grateful to the

the one, and suspicious of the other. He had motives, however, and principles of action in his mind, which some soft souls in the world seem to know nothing of; amongst these, the gratification that his visit to Lord Crowbery would administer to his mind, as an insult to the patroness of Ratcliffe's living, was to him very pleasing on reflection. That his visit would be highly offensive to Sir Roger, and cut off his return for ever after to the house of Manstock, he clearly saw; but there was no loss could accrue from an exclusion, where he never wished more to be admitted. In fact, he saw how totally he was ruined in this family; and having no doubt that his niece had dealt the stab to Henry, he was not sorry to avail himself of the protection of Lord Crowbery, and the countenance, which his reception of her would give to her story, in opposition to all others; but what above all weighed with him for accepting the invitation was, the hope it held out to his ambition, upon the event of Lady Crowbery's death, if his niece would consent to govern herself by his advice.

Reasoning in this manner, he prepared for his departure from the house of his friend: and this he did so secretly and expeditiously, that he stole his march, unknown to Sir Roger, leaving only the few following lines as his apology and adieu:—

“ Mr. Claypole leaves his respectful compliments to Sir Roger Manstock, with thanks for
 “ all favours: the duty which he owes to a much-
 “ injur'd orphan niece compels him to so hasty a
 “ departure, that time, conspiring with his own
 “ feelings, prevents him from taking leave in
 “ person of a friend, whom he has so long and
 “ justly held in honour.”

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An order was now dispatched from Sir Roger, directing Dame May to come to him at the Great House. This was instantly obeyed by the good woman, who was given to understand, in a few words, that her longer residence in the house, which Isabella had provided for her, would be very readily dispensed with. To this she immediately answered, that she would without delay prepare for her removal, having received an invitation from her daughter, who, by the blessing of Providence, was now in a condition to support her; she therefore begged leave to return her humble thanks for the favours she had received, and would no longer be a burthen to his charity; she would be gone that very night, if Sir Roger wished it, and leave the few things she had in the house to follow her the next day. To this the Baronet shortly answered, that it was very well, and there the business would have closed, but that it occurred to him as she was leaving the room, to put a question to her for curiosity's sake, respecting Fanny Claypole, which was simply this,—“If she understood or believed, that the stab in Henry's arm was given by her hand purposely and revengefully?” The poor woman was staggered with the abruptness of the question, and the stern manner in which it was put. She hesitated through fear and confusion; upon which, in an angry tone, Sir Roger told her, he had no wish to hear her answer, for he should put little faith in what any body said, who was not always ready with a plain reply to a plain question, and with this rebuke waved his hand and dismissed her.

In relating this short scene as it passed, we are sensible that we must represent the character of the worthy Baronet in a harsher light than it has hitherto been seen; but in extenuation we have

to say, that he had impressions on his mind not favourable to this poor woman, and was also disturbed in temper at the present moment, by the valedictory note of his seceding friend Mr. Claypole, just before delivered into his hands. Under the same impression, he was meditating to give orders for dismantling the cottage of its furniture, when Isabella entered the room, upon which he thought proper to apprize her of his design, qualifying it with some introductory observations upon the jealousy, which such favours created in the parish, and the unsuitable elegance with which she had fitted the apartment: "With your leave, therefore," added he, "I shall give orders to have the furniture remov'd, and the cottage reduc'd to a condition better fitted to the poverty of the next inhabitants, whom charity may recommend to it." Isabella bowed her head in token of obedience, but felt the unkindness of this order in the most poignant manner; she recollected that she had been allowed to consider this little tenement as her own, and to carry on her works, both within doors and without, after her own simple but elegant fancy: the resumption of a fond gift, and the reversal of all her little amusing operations, by a decree so peremptory and unexpected, struck deep into her heart, yet she commanded herself so far, when asked if she had any further use for the furniture, as to make answer with great mildness and submission, that there was nothing there she particularly wished to preserve, but a certain print, which she had hung up in the parlour, as a memorial of the donor, and the similitude of a face, which had ever been accustom'd to look upon her with the tenderest affection. "Pooh! pooh!" replied Sir Roger, "you have copies enough of that unhappy countenance, and I wou'd advise you

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you to put this out of the way as speedily as you can, lest it shou'd sometime or other tell tales of what it has been a spectator of."—"I am answer'd, Sir," replied Isabella, "and with a reproach, which, if I am capable of deserving from you, I must be unfit any longer to remain in your presence."

So saying, she hid her face in her handkerchief, and hastened out of the room to give vent to her agony.

CHAPTER IX.

A pious Mind resorts to Providence for its Support.

FEW moments had passed after Isabella left her father, before he felt as much pain from the asperity of the retort he had given, as she had experienced in receiving it. Nature could not be long expelled from his heart, nor could ill humour take any lasting possession of it. He wished he had not said it; he felt the cruelty, the injustice of wreaking vengeance on the harmless works of her fancy, and, perhaps, he would at this moment have not been sorry, could he have recalled the messenger he had dispatched to Lady Crowbery. Those sensations of regret, which a good mind is capable of, Sir Roger felt; but to confess and atone is the effort of a great mind as well as good, and that was not bestowed by nature upon him. Men, who affect the reputation of a decided character, are too apt to mistake obstinacy in error for consistency of opinion; and this was Sir Roger's misfortune. Few things could have galled him

him more than Claypole's conduct, yet his whole life did not furnish so great an instance of weakness, as his pertinacious attachment to that unworthy friend. No hypocrisy is sooner discovered than the pretended generosity of a self-interested man, and opportunities enough had offered themselves to Sir Roger Manstock for developing the real character of Claypole; but the stronger the light was that struck upon him, so much the closer he shut his eyes against it. The veil was now drawn off at once, and prejudice could no longer save him from the conviction of his own mistake. This vexatious discovery was just rankling in his mind, when innocence, unfortunately falling in his way, was made to suffer (as too often happens) for the guilty who had escaped his resentment.

The next morning brought over Susan May to Manstock House, who was admitted to her lovely mistress to pay her last duty, and take leave. On this occasion, she was led into a diffusive recital of all particulars respecting Henry's late generous proceeding, to which Isabella lent a willing ear. As the one recounted the noble acts of her benefactor, the heart of the other glowed with delight; his virtues, his sufferings, his magnanimity, his self-denials were enumerated and acknowledged; when the subject of his mental perfections was exhausted, his person, his graceful form, the beauty of his countenance, became the topic of their praise, and on this subject Susan's eloquence seemed animated into warmer phrase and diction than on the former. Whilst this was going on, Isabella's blushes witnessed to the sensibility of soul, which this recital inspired; at last, no longer able to refrain from joining in the praise of one so dear to her, she said, "I perfectly agree with you in every

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every thing you have said, or can say, in commendation of your amiable benefactor. I do not think it is in nature for any human being to be more noble in mind, more charming in person; and I feel no shame in confessing to you, what I have avow'd to my father, that in purity of soul I love him. But alas! alas! I have difficulties to encounter, objections to overcome, and sorrows to endure, that will probably make that a condition of necessity, which you may remember was once my choice, and devote me to a single life."

"Heaven in its mercy forbid!" cried Susan, "that so much beauty and love shou'd be left to pine away in solitariness and disappointment; fathers must have hearts of marble, that can so controul and thwart the virtuous affections of their children."—"Hold," cried Isabella, "you must not talk in that stile, Susan, if you have any value for my friendship; my father must always be spoken of with respect in my hearing; we will therefore change the subject to what we cannot differ about, and you will tell me what you think of Henry's wound: Did he tell you how he came by it?" To this Susan replied, that he had been very reserved upon the subject; but, for her own part, she was certain it had been given him by that desperate creature Fanny Claypole, in the rage of disappointment; "which, indeed," added she, "her own confession puts out of doubt; for my mother told me in secrecy, that when she attended her in her fits and ravings, that and many other things came out, which are almost too bad to relate."—"I don't wish to hear them," replied Isabella, "for things of that sort are perfectly disgusting to me; and, I dare say, if any thing improper pass'd, she herself was in the fault of it."—"So much I will venture to inform you of,"

said

said Susan, "that she was not in the fault that it did not pass; but the truth of the fact is, that the rage of the lady was rous'd by the virtue of the man, and the stab was given him in the fury of revenge and disappointment."—"That I can well believe," replied the blushing fair; "and I own to you, I am glad at my heart that Henry did not demean himself by stooping to her arts; but I wonder what is become of her." To this Susan answered, that she was now with the Lord of Crowbery Castle, where she was treated with great attention, and where she did not doubt but she was playing a very deep and cunning game, and the rather, as she understood that her reverend uncle had made one of the party, and was now upon a visit at the Castle.—"So soon after the departure of my cousin!" cried Isabella, sighing; "that is indeed extraordinary on his part. I understood he had left us, but I did not guess he was gone thither of all places; I am sure my father must have felt that affront very severely."—"I hope it will open his eyes," replied Susan, "for all the neighbours cry out upon Mr. Claypole already." Isabella made some slight observation upon this, and here the conference ended.

Isabella, now alone, resigned herself to meditation, and after a few minutes so employed, broke out in the following soliloquy:—"Oh Henry! mysterious son of an unhappy mother, little does my father think how nearly thou art allied to him; and though I am now interdicted from all communication with thee, I will still nourish one spark of hope, that thy affection may prevail against appearances, and thou persist to love me, till time shall develope the secret which honour now forbids me to divulge, in spite of all temptations. May providence protect thee in all dangers, and
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by restoring thy beloved parent to health, crown thy filial undertaking with a happy event! meanwhile, though I will pray for thee in secret, I must remember the promise I have given to my father, and sacredly fulfil it in its strictest sense, without prevarication: this is my duty; but when I reflect what circumstances may occur to shake my constancy, and overpower my nature, I tremble at the task I have engag'd in. Where then shall I find fortitude in the hour of trial, and whither shall I resort, but to thee, O thou, who art the father of all those that faithfully refer themselves to thy protection? take then, I pray thee, into thy most gracious disposal, my heart and its purposes, too weak without thy strengthening providence, too fallible without thy merciful support."

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

BOOK THE NINTH.

CHAPTER I.

A short interlude between the Acts.

WHILST the dramatic author cheers his audience with a tune between the acts, I am forced to fill up my intervals with a treatise, and (what is still worse) with a treatise of my own making, which is not quite the case with his tune. His spectators are regaled with harmony in a brilliant theatre, amidst a blaze of lights, my reader, in his solitary chair, sits moping over the dull strain of an uninteresting dissertation, which probably has little other merit but of putting him to sleep: what inspires his critics with good humour, only stupifies mine.

But if these are his advantages in the periods of suspension, many more and much greater are they, when he returns to the stage and I to my history. The actor before the curtain and the scenist behind it conspire to lift him into fame, almost without any effort of his own: he is upheld by the charms of spectacle, I am loaded with the drudgery of detail; he has castles in the clouds, that drop down at the word of command, we are forced to labour late and early, till our brains are well nigh beaten into brick and mortar with the slavery of building them. A nimble scene-painter will dash off a cataract in full froth and foam, that will cost us twenty pages of hard pumping, before we can get a single drop to flow: how many pens do we split in conjuring up a storm of thunder and lightning, whilst he, by one mark in the margin of his

his manuscript, sets all the elements in a roar; we find it a very troublesome job to furnish horses and carriages for the conveyance of our company, his characters are wafted from scene to scene by a whistle; when his heroine is in a crisis, some one cries,—*Hah! she faints!*—and the inimitable Siddons dies away; another cries,—*Hah! she revives!*—the inimitable Siddons is alive again. We cannot do this without salts and hartshorn at the least, and in an obstinate fit, hardly with the help of burnt feathers, an unfavoury experiment he is never driven to.

Let us put the case, that the author of a novel shall lay his scene in the house of some abandoned strumpet, where a set of cut-throats resort for the plotting of some murderous conspiracy, and let the hero of his story, for whom our pity is to be interested, enlist himself in this gang, and let him introduce a virtuous wife, the darling of his heart, and the faithful partner of his bed, into this house of ill-fame and assembly of villains, there to be left in the hands of these miscreants as a hostage for his good faith, telling her withal, that he is sworn to assassinate her father that very night, who but would cry out against the conduct of such a fable? but let Otway's fascinating muse put this into melodious metre, let the bell toll for execution, bring forth the rack, send the actress on the stage with hair dishevelled, cheeks of chalk, and eyes wildly staring—no matter why so mad at once, nor what she talks of, (be it of *seas of milk* or *ships of amber*)—all hearts bow down to her resistless energy; she takes her poet on her wings, and soars to fame.

Wonderful in all ages, and honoured by all enlightened nations, hath been the actor's magic art; the theatres and forums of Greece were em-

bellished with his statues; they gazed upon him *like a descended god*; their greatest poets, down to Æschylus and Aristophanes, trod the stage in person: Rome also honoured her actors, and they in return were the grace and ornament of all societies; their sayings were recorded, and collections of their apothegms have come down to our times: Cæsar in all his power made suite to them, and even knights of Rome did not revolt from the profession. It remained for modern times to complete their triumphs, by admitting female candidates into the lists; from that moment Nature took possession of her rights; the finest feelings were consigned to the fairest forms; the very Muse herself appeared in her own sex and person: beauty, that gives being to the poet's rapturous vision, a voice that guides his language to the heart, smiles that enchant, tears that dissolve us, with looks that fascinate, and dying plaintive tones that sink into the soul, are now the appropriate and exclusive attributes of that all-conquering sex; in short, they bind our nobles in chains, and our princes in links—of love.

CHAPTER II.

An Adventure on board a Frigate.

WE now return to our hero, who, with fair weather and favouring gales, was far advanced upon his voyage. A few, and but slight sensations of uneasiness had attended his initiation on ship-board. Cary's gay and gallant spirit cheered him at all moments; the novelty of the scene, the succession of adventures which occurred

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to him in passing through the Channel, and the striking characters of British seamen, for ever in his view, were to a mind like his most interesting contemplations. The cleanliness, good order, and discipline of Cary's frigate were exemplary; and as she had cleared the Channel, and was upon the sharp look-out for an enemy, expectation kept every body alert, and in a state of warlike preparation.

Tom Weevil was a lively thoughtless fellow, and had passed through all the discipline of being seized up to the shrouds, and every other species of sea-jokes practised upon fresh-water novices, with perfect good-humour. He had made acquaintance with several gentlemen of easy address, particularly in the foretop, with the captain of which, Jack Jones by name, he had established a sworn friendship; and as Tom was very fond of taking the air on that elevated station where Jack presided, he was mostly to be found in the afore-said top, where, in leisure hours, he edified his company with reading (a gift which he alone possessed) the illustrious history of Robinson Crusoe, to which all ears were open, and universal faith from all parties subscribed without reserve. Happy would it be for congregations in general were they so attentive to their preacher as Tom's audience were to him: they were also able commentators upon many parts of the work; but as they did not always concur in the same explanations and remarks, the progress of the history was liable to considerable interruptions and chasms, whilst the interlocutory parts were filled up with oaths and lies, given and taken very liberally in the true spirit of controversy.

Mr. William Williams, the surgeon (or, in the sea phrase the doctor) had so ably conducted the
cure

cure of Henry's wound, by adding nothing to nature's operations but cleanliness and fresh lint, that his arm was come to its perfect use, and, it may be presumed, his spirit was not unwilling to try its strength upon the enemies of his country, if they came in his way. It was now early morning, and that wished-for opportunity was in near approach: Henry was on deck, enjoying that most magnificent of all spectacles, the sun rising over the waters, a rayless globe of fire; his heart expanded at the sight, and his thoughts ascended towards the Creator of those wonders he contemplated. Captain Cary was at present under easy sail, and the weather fine, when the man at the mast-head descried a sail a-head: instantly the officer on watch informed the Captain, who, leaping out of his cot, huddled on his clothes, and in little more time than a lion would bestow upon his toilet, presented himself on the quarter-deck, having ordered all hands up, and sail to be made. A very little time discovered her to be a square-rigged vessel, and as she kept her course towards Cary, with the wind in her favour, she was soon visible from the deck, where every glass in the ship was directed towards her, and every voice pronounced her to be a frigate of equal or superior force to their own; and upon a nearer view, from certain marks, which experienced seamen are quick in discerning, she was adjudged, without one dissenting voice, to be an enemy, and an enemy, it should seem, that did not decline an action.

Now began that awful arrangement in which silence still as death prevailed, and every thing moved at the word of one man, whose voice, and none other, was heard, and to whose command absolute obedience followed on the instant. Henry surveyed

surveyed the whole with silent awe, and reverence for a service so conducted: his heart glowed with love and pride for his friend, whom situation seemed now to have transformed into a new creature; that countenance, which hitherto he had only seen charactered with the mirthful smile of raillery and frolic, was now terrible and frowning, as he bent his eye upon the enemy, in the same act of preparation with himself. He was a perfect hero arming for battle, courage tempered with deliberate circumspection marked every word he said, which were distinctly and precisely given out in orders to every officer in the ship; the lieutenants repaired to their quarters, the men assembled in the tops, and honest Weevil was honoured with a post at one of the cabin-guns, in company with eight other brave fellows. Cary, having hoisted his colours, addressed himself to his men in a short but animating speech, that in language suited to their habits and apprehensions gave them to understand, that whilst he had breath in his body those colours were never to come down; that the advantage of the few guns the enemy had over them was to be compensated by superior skill and courage, and he was resolved that republican frigate should either follow him into a British port or sink alongside of him. This was followed by three cheers; when, turning to Henry, he said, "Now, my brave Henry, if you like the sport, we will give you a taste of it; this fellow seems to have some stomach for fighting, but no great management in bringing it to bear: I see he means to fight us on the starboard side, and has arm'd himself accordingly; but I shall baulk his fancy, and take him where he is not prepar'd." This said, he gave the word, helm-a-weather, and by

by a rapid manœuvre well executed, brought his frigate on the other side, pouring in a raking fire as he sheered across him. This manœuvre produced much confusion and some loss to the enemy, who are in the practice of arming only on one side. The position Cary had taken, and the rapidity of his fire, had great effect, as the action was close. When the enemy had recovered from his surprise, his behaviour was perfectly gallant; and by something giving way on board the British frigate, she became unmanageable, and fell broadside to upon the Frenchman; part of the crew being occupied in repairing this accident, the enemy seized the opportunity for boarding, being full of men. Henry now felt his spirit called upon in a manner not to be resisted; a confused and scrambling fight took place upon the gang-way, where the French had lodged themselves in some numbers, under conduct of a spirited officer, whom Henry immediately singled out as his man; he flew to the scene of action sword in hand, shouting to the people as he advanced, and at the very first stroke brought down the leader of the boarding crew, who fell dead into the waste. Animated by his example, the defendants became invincible, and repulse and slaughter ensued: the few that escaped back to their ship were instantly followed by the victorious party, Henry being one of the first, if not the very first, that leapt on board the national frigate; there was no leader like him to rally the fugitives; in the first fury of the onset the carnage was indiscriminate, till a general cry for quarter recalled that mercy which is never long absent from the hearts of our countrymen, and stopt the hand of death. The colours were hauled down, and three cheers from the conquerors gave notice to their gallant captain and comrades alongside of them, that they

they were in possession of their prize. A crowd gathered round Henry, who, like Achilles bathed in the blood of Hector, stood in the midst of them tremendously beautiful: he had thrown off his coat before he entered into action, his hat had been beaten off, and his hair, Medusa like, fell in wild disorder on his forehead, his eyes seemed on fire, the frown yet dwelt upon his brow, and the angry spot of crimson hue still burnt upon his cheek. A confusion of voices now arose, all applauding their young volunteer, with many huggings and squeezings, and slappings on the back, garnished with oaths of the most unaaccountable variety, which, through an excess of good-will, blasted every limb in the company, and sent our hero himself to the devil by a thousand different conveyances. Amongst these vociferous admirers his eye singled out a figure in the outward row, whom he discovered to be his friend Tom Weevil, in spite of a small alteration in his countenance, occasioned by the removal of one ear and part of a cheek out of their place, and dangling upon his shoulder by the help of certain fibres which still restrained them from total separation. Henry flew to his wounded friend, compressed the fleshy fragments into their place as well as he could, and taking off his neckcloth, bound them up, and hurried him away to Doctor Williams, whom he found in the cockpit stript to his shirt, with his sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, and bathed in a mingled stream of blood and sweat. "When you can turn your hand," cried Henry, "to a brave lad, who wants a little of your art, I shall be oblig'd to you." A foretop man, one of Weevil's audience, was then under Williams's hands, who seemed in a most hopeless case. "It's all up with me," cried the dying sailor; "death

has stopt my grog for everlasting; therefore, do you see, Doctor, never break your head about me, but turn your hand to the lad, splice his chops, and send him going." The heroism of this expiring warrior, the scene of human misery which the cockpit presented, and the gory figure of Williams himself, were too much for the unhardened nerves of Henry—the tears started from his eyes. The dying man was still anxious for the glory of his country, and demanded to know what had been the event of the fight. When Henry had informed him of this, life seemed to reinspire his half-closed eyes, a gleam of joy fled over his distorted visage; "Oh! that I cou'd have one peep at the prize," he exclaimed, "before my day-lights are out."—"So thou shalt," exclaimed Jack Jones, who was standing over him, "if the brave volunteer will condescend to bear a hand."—"If I was an admiral," replied our hero, "I shou'd be honour'd by the office;" and having so said, taking up one end of the hammock on which the dying man was stretched, and Jones taking the other, they carried him up the ladder, and placed him where, with the prize in his view, he breathed out his gallant spirit in the arms of victory.

CHAPTER III.

Our Hero makes an interesting Discovery.

WHEN our hero had performed the last offices to the dying sailor, he went upon the quarter-deck, where Captain Cary was busily occupied in giving orders upon various matters. The first moment

moment he could detach himself from business, he ran to Henry, and throwing his arms about him, overwhelmed him with applauses: great was their mutual joy to find that neither had received the slightest hurt; but what a change did it appear to Henry, as he cast his eyes about the frigate, late in such beautiful and perfect trim, now exhibiting nothing but a pent-house of dangling rags and mangled rigging over head, and below, a chaos of broken booms, shattered boats, and decks floated with water black as Styx with the scattering of the powder. When Cary had devoted a few moments to his gallant friend, he called the first lieutenant to him, and shaking him cordially by the hand, gave him joy of his prize; "Go, my brave fellow," he cried, "and take possession of that noble frigate, which your valour and good conduct has contributed to conquer; and you, volunteer," added he, addressing himself to Henry, "go with your officer, and board her for the second time; but here," pointing to his coat, that laid under the barricade, "slip on your clothes, and get a hat." He then gave directions for shifting the prisoners, and that proper care should be had of the wounded men, by superintending the treatment they received from their own surgeons: and now began the carpenter's and boatswain's reports, with a long train of various duties, that fall to the share of every one in Cary's situation, and which none were better qualified to execute than he was.

When the first lieutenant, accompanied by our hero, came on board the prize, he found the crew and passengers of a Lisbon packet, which she had captured in her cruise, and of these he bade Henry take charge, whilst he gave attention to more pressing matters. Henry, now acting under orders,

orders, immediately began to exert his delegated authority, by assembling his countrymen from all parts of the vessel, for the joyful purpose of restoring them to their liberty. When he was about to embark them in the boat, that waited to receive them, under the command of Lord Frederic, our young midshipman heretofore described, one of the company informed him, there was a sick gentleman in his hammock below, whose state of health required instant attention. To this person Henry immediately went, with one of the party for a guide, who brought him to the cable-tier, where the sick gentleman was lying in his hammock attended by two servants. When our hero had imparted to him the cheering purpose of his visit, and recommended a speedy removal on board the British frigate, where he would be better accommodated, he answered, in a faint tone, that it would be a most welcome release; he had been tortured with noise and clamour, and, at the same time, nearly suffocated with heat and stench; but surely," added he, "I have heard that voice before, tho' I cannot discern your countenance in this dark place. Is it possible, Sir, that you and I can have met at Crowbery?" A short explanation now took place, which, to Henry's great and joyful surprise, convinced him that providence had directed him to the rescue of his father. Difficult though it was to suppress his emotion on such a discovery, yet he had command enough over himself to check his tongue, and immediately began his operations for removing him from his loathsome abode, all which he planned and executed with the tenderest care and attention. The refreshing sensation of air and motion revived the spirits of the redeemed prisoner; he was lifted into the boat in his bedding; Henry's eye watched every movement

ment that could annoy him, Henry's arm supported him through every moment of the passage, and his care superintended the operation of getting him on board, where he instantly assigned him his own cot, and recommended him, in the strongest terms, to his friend Williams.

So reformed was the appearance of Cary's frigate, that it appeared to Henry as the work of magic; but what cannot British seamen, well commanded, perform? She was now once more in sailing trim, her decks washed, and her lumber stowed away. Henry delivered up his redeemed prisoners, with a list of their names, to the captain; and, having executed these instructions, demanded if there were any further commands for him? "Nothing, at present, but to refresh yourself in the cabin," replied Cary, "where you will find cold meat and wine, and some of the national officers at work upon it." Thither our exhausted hero eagerly repaired; and, as he was mingling with the prisoners, he heard one of them relating a circumstance of an English deserter, who, being mutinous at his gun in the time of action, and refusing to serve it against his countrymen, had been run through the back by one of the officers on the spot. This was told in French, which Henry had enough of the language to understand, and, in the same language, made shift to enquire the name of the renegado. This the Frenchman did not know; but he learnt enough of his station and description in the ship to guide him in the enquiries which his humanity towards a fellow creature, under such circumstances, inspired him to make. He therefore snatched a hasty morsel, took a refreshing draught of wine, and jumped into the boat, that was just then going off to the prize. Here he soon traced his enquiries to
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the wretched object he was in search of, and in whom there appeared so much to pity and condemn. He found him stretched at his length upon the bare deck, beside the gun he had been posted at, incapable of raising himself up, floated with his own blood, and at the point of death. Judge, reader, what was Henry's sensation, when, in this expiring wretch, he recognized the features of his acquaintance Bowsey. "Ah! miserable man," he cried, "is this your fate at last? Do you not know me? Speak to me, if you have strength to utter; look on me, if you can lift your eyes, and I will yet give you the last comfort of knowing that your victim, Thomas Weevil, survives the blow you dealt him."—"Good Lord, good Lord," murmured the expiring man; "Weevil is alive, then I am no murderer: I know you, Mr. Henry; you are a good man; I wish I had taken your good counsel, then I had never been in these damn'd fellows' hands; I am dying, I am dying; I wou'd not fight against my country; tho' bad enough in all reason, I was not such a shabby rascal as that came to, so a scoundrel thrust his sword into my back, (the devil reward him for it!) and here I've lain ever since." Henry saw the agonies of death upon him; he grew convulsed at times, then brought out a few words, and seemed struggling to reach out his hand, which Henry no sooner perceived than stooping down, he took him by the hand, saying, "Farewell, the Lord have mercy upon you and forgive you." This was understood by Bowsey, who, deeply groaning, muttered something, of which Henry could make out no more than, *Sleep, sleep—they say it is all sleep.*—"They are liars and blasphemers," exclaimed Henry, and was proceeding, when he perceived the senses he addressed were closed, the last breath was spent, and

and the soul had taken flight to those unknown regions, where all who credit or inculcate these impious doctrines, will be destined to experience a terrible confutation of their *eternal sleeps*.

CHAPTER. IV.

First Love strikes deep.

WHEN Captain Cary had taken into consideration the state of his prize, (a large forty gun frigate) the number of his prisoners, and various other circumstances, which made a separation unadvisable, he determined to avail himself of a fair wind, and his proximity to the coast, for conveying her into the first English port he could make, though his own destination was for the Tagus; he therefore made known this his resolution to his officers in each ship, and steered for the channel; the wind continued to serve, and he pushed into Falmouth, as the first port that was favourable to his purpose.

Here Henry landed with his father, who still concealed himself under the name of Smith. The ships took the first occasion for proceeding to Plymouth, where they could receive the necessary repair, whilst Henry staid with his two convalescents at Falmouth, for Tom Weevil's wound was now, by Williams's skill, far advanced towards a cure. The last conversation that Henry held with Williams was on the evening preceding the departure of the ships, when with some difficulty he prevailed upon him to accept a suitable present for his great attention to his own and Weevil's wounds:

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Mr. Smith, so called, had rewarded him in a more magnificent stile, according to the customs of the East. In this conversation Williams, whose modesty had seldom permitted him to speak of himself and his own adventures, was enticed into a more circumstantial detail of past occurrences, which it imports not this history to record in any other period, than that in which he was employed as an assistant to our acquaintance Zachary Cawdle at Crowbery, where the youthful charms of Susan May, then in their first blossom, made sad havoc with Williams's susceptible heart. It did not appear, even from his own modest account, that Susan was altogether inexorable, for Williams was a very handsome fellow, with a thousand good qualities, and, over all, one of the sweetest tempers man ever possessed, but there were rubs innumerable, which fortune perversely threw in the way of his passion that Williams had not skill or confidence to struggle with: the chief of these had root in Jemima's jealousy and spite, some sprung from honest Zachary himself, who thought love on great recommendation in a compounder of medicines; and others were thrown in his way by the collusion of Blachford with Dame Jemima, the bright eyes of the damsel having set fire to the bilious particles of the Justice blood in no less degree than to the milky ones of Williams. To extricate himself from this dilemma by deliberate means required more nerves than Williams had to spare, he therefore took quicker but less regular measures, and fairly escaped by flight, taking nothing away with him but an aching heart, and defrauding his master of no one tittle of his right, save only of the pleasure of paying him certain running arrears of wages, which Williams probably had neither time nor inclination to demand.

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When Williams had concluded his narrative, Henry resolved first to try the pulse of his affection, before he threw the lure of Susan's fortune in his way, and this he rightly conceived to be the most honourable proceeding to both parties. He therefore began to discourse with him in such a way as might best discover how far Susan still kept any hold upon the heart of her first lover, and when this was made clear to him, he proceeded to unfold the dark transaction which Blachford had been concerned in, and the consequences it had produced. Here Williams, no longer able to restrain himself, broke out into violent denunciations against her betrayer, taking Heaven to witness, that whenever opportunity should serve, he would have his revenge upon him for what he had done; but this Henry soon put a stop to, by informing him how completely the offender was now out of his reach." It is an exit too good for such a villain," cried Williams, "he shou'd have died by the halter, or, if the law cou'd not have reach'd him, my arm shou'd; but though his life is out of my reach, his memory is not, and I will vindicate the innocent against the guilty, by making public the truth, and sharing my last shilling in support of my poor girl, wherever she can be found, and to whatever situation she may be reduc'd."—"That is a resolution," said Henry, every way worthy of you, and bespeaks a generous soul; it also convinces me that you lov'd her honourably, and esteem'd her worthy of your love."—"And she is worthy still," rejoined he. "Can I love her less because she has suffer'd wrong and violence from the blackest wretch that ever breath'd? No, I shou'd be base as he is if I cou'd; but I am impatient to know what has been her fate, and how she has struggled under misery
to

so complicated." This drew out that account, which no relater but one of Henry's delicacy of sentiment would have reserved for the conclusion of his story; and though it may be well believed the facts now recounted were not embellished with any self-encomiums, yet the coldest colour he could give to truth could not prevent his hearer from receiving it with transports of admiration and gratitude.—"Oh Heavens!" cried Williams, "what a soul is yours? And have you risked a life so precious in a voluntary combat with those madmen? God be prais'd, the villains have not drawn one drop of blood from your veins! well might we conquer, who were headed by an angel."—"Stop," cried Henry; "we will talk common sense, if you please, and treat each other like rational creatures. I have been telling you mere matter of fact, and as you seem to take a warm share in our friend Susan's interest, so far my story has repaid you for the pains it gave you in some parts, by the pleasure you receive in the conclusion of it. When your duty permits, and your inclination disposes you to make a trip to Crowbery, you will find your old acquaintance respectably establish'd; and if you see her with my eyes, and judge of her as I think you must, I persuade myself you will find no one charm of person, or good quality of heart, impair'd by what has pass'd since you lost sight of her: and now a thought strikes me, Mr. Williams, as a hint for you to turn in your mind, which is simply this: your old friend Zachary Cawdle is now from home upon a service, which I have reason to believe, will set him free from business for the rest of his days; shou'd this be the case, and if you prefer a stationary employ to a roving one like your present, it is not improbable but means may be taken for settling you

you in his business, if the spot is agreeable to you, and the object worth your thoughts." To this Williams answered, that the situation indeed would be very desirable; but he doubted his capacity of obtaining it, for he had no money, nor was in the way of getting any.—"Then I perceive," quoth Henry, "my good friend, you have no present thoughts of marrying." Williams blushed and was silent. Henry smiled, and shaking him by the hand, bade him be of good courage, telling him that it was probable he should have an opportunity of talking with Zachary before long, and that he would find means to inform him of the result of their conversation.

CHAPTER V.

Our Hero quits the Sea.

THE next day Captain Cary took his departure for Plymouth, carrying his prize with him. Some time would be necessary for repairing the damages his frigate had received in the action, and this determined Henry to stay at Falmouth, not only for the purpose of attending upon his father, but in the hope of hearing some tidings of Lady Crowbery, whose arrival might now be looked for from day to day. Mr. Smith had taken lodgings in a private house, and was recovering his strength apace: to him Henry repaired, after his conversation with Williams above related, and found a chaise waiting at his door for a morning airing. His tender attentions had so won the heart of his unconscious father, that he seemed
to

to live only in his company, and as this airing was a first effort, Henry offered to attend upon him in the carriage, which was most thankfully accepted. The driver was directed to chuse the smoothest road, and go gently along; the sick man's spirits were revived by the air and motion, and now for the first time he found strength to converse more at large, than as yet he had been able to do. —“Your goodness to me, dear sir,” said he, “has been such as I can never find words to express my sense of: I have hitherto been silent, not through want of gratitude but want of powers to give utterance to it; yet I have much to say to you, some things to explain, and others to apologize for. In the first place I should tell you, that in all our casual rencounters, since the first time we met, when I pretended to have picked up a ring of Lady Crowbery's, I have been imposing myself upon you under a feigned name and character: I am the third son now living of the Lord Pendennis, my name Henry Delapoer; a very early attachment to the loveliest of her sex being most unfortunately traversed by her father decided my fate, and hurried me to the East Indies, with a broken heart upon a desperate adventure. It was the will of providence I should survive my loss of happiness, by turning aside from me in various ways, almost miraculous, that death which I presumptuously courted. As my heart never varied from its first affection, I never had a thought of marrying; and though I have been little, studious of accumulating money, yet circumstances, unfought for on my part, have thrown a fortune upon me, which, though not to be compared with many, is an affluent one, and, which is better, fairly earned, without cruelty or extortion. Having now disclosed to you who I am, I shall next inform
you

you of my purpose in setting out for Lisbon, in which undertaking I suspect it will be found that we have both the same object, namely, that of tendering our last melancholy offices to the much injured lady of that execrable tyrant Crowbery: of your motives, my dear Sir, I know no more than common report has given out, and they do credit to your gratitude, for I have heard she has been a beneficent and kind friend to you, and I cannot doubt but she has acted on the purest principles; how it comes to pass that I am so affected by her situation, and enraged against her oppressor, a single word will explain, when I tell you she was all but my wedded wife, when her inexorable father overtook us, in the last stage of our progress towards Gretna Green, and obstinately severed that knot which a very few hours would have made indissoluble. Merciful Heaven! what a heart-rending moment was that, which tore me from the arms of my Cecilia! Oh! Sir, it was attended with such aggravating horrors! Figure to yourself the circumstance most killing to the heart of honour, and that case was our's. What might have been the result of it I can well conceive; what it was Heaven only knows; for I was hurried out of England, and remained in ignorance of her fate; and now I find her wedded to a brute, childless, unhappy, and alas! far gone in a decay. If providence shall graciously permit her to survive her voyage, Lisbon gives me one last chance of meeting her on this side Heaven; if not, the short remnant of days that may be left to me shall be spent in bewailing her loss, and, if opportunity can be found, in avenging her wrongs."

Here the father ceased, exhausted not less by the agitation of his mind, than by the exertion of his discourse; a short silence took place, which

Henry

Henry was too considerate of his repose to interrupt; at length perceiving that he expected a reply, he spoke as follows,—“ I am greatly honoured by the confidence you repose in me, and it gives me the highest satisfaction to know, that my small services have been useful to you in any degree: I was certainly well prepared for the discovery you have been pleased to make, for it has long been out of doubt with me, that your first assumed condition was not your real one; the manners, character, and deportment of a man of birth and education cannot easily be disguised, and your's least of all. I am not totally uninformed of Lady Crowbery's early attachment to the honourable Captain Delapoer, my life from infancy to a period not long pass'd having been spent under the care and tuition of a most intimate friend of her's, the Reverend Mr. Ratcliffe, lately deceased; by that excellent man I was received as a deserted nameless infant, deposited at his door, and recommended to his benevolent protection by my mysterious mother. Through some secret channel, unknown to me, the charges of my maintenance were supplied, when at his death they stopped at once, and I was thrown friendless and helpless on the world at large. Misfortunes, which at some other time I will detail to you, fell upon me, pressing me down to the extremity of human misery and distress; in this state the charity of Lady Crowbery found me; her bounty to me drew the malice of her tyrant into open acts of oppression, loading her with calumny most gross and injurious, and racking her too sensitive feelings, till her tender frame gave way, and sunk under the attack; it is to me, therefore, belongs the punishment of that monster, for it is I who have been made the plea and apology for his abominable cruelty. Her death,

death, which heaven avert, would set my hands at liberty, and as I have an auspicious impression on my mind that time will shortly reveal the present mystery of my birth, I may then be in possession of a name cowardice cannot shrink from; and when his pride can no longer shelter itself in the obscurity of my person, his cunning will no longer be able to evade the terror of my appeal. Here then you see the motives of my journey to Lisbon, and rightly suggest that they are in some respects congenial with your own. Undiminished affection on your part, and ardent gratitude on mine, attract us to the same point; and this being the case, I should humbly conceive it will be our mutual wish to wait her arrival in this port, and, if she has no objection, to embark with her in the same packet, if your health serves for the undertaking."

"You speak my wishes correctly," replied the father, "and as for my health, it is so secondary an object compared to her's that I do not suffer it to occupy a single thought." As these words were uttering, a chaise came in sight, followed by another, and by two servants on horseback. Henry started at the sight, and exclaimed, "My God! here is the very lady herself." Then calling to the postillion to stop, he hastily opened the door of the chaise, and leaping out, planted himself, by the side of the road, which it was necessary for the approaching carriages to take.

Henry, though greatly agitated, was not wanting in sufficient presence of mind to be cautious in his mode of stopping Lady Crowbery's carriage, which he did as gently and as silently as he could contrive. When he presented himself at the window, the exhausted traveller had raised herself up to enquire into the cause of the stop, when immediately as her eyes lighted on the face of her son, the

the blood rushed into her faded cheeks, and she exclaimed—"My Henry! my Henry! is it possible?" and was proceeding, when, to save her from unseasonable exertions, he told his story in as few words as possible, omitting for the present the circumstance of his meeting with his father, who remained in his chaise, drawn-out of the road at some distance.

He had taken the precaution to secure her quiet apartments in a private house, and having directed her drivers to follow his chaise, he left her, and returned to his father, whom he found in great agitation of spirits. It was agreed between them that Henry should prepare Lady Crowbery, before Mr. Delapoer attempted to see her: and as soon therefore as he had entered the town he quitted the chaise, and conducted Lady Crowbery's people to the door of the house he had taken for her.

Here she alighted, and between Henry and Doctor Cawdle was conducted to her apartment, which, presenting her with a fine view of the sea, and being both in point of aspect and interior accommodations much to her liking, seemed to have the effect of reviving her spirits, exhilarated no doubt by the sight, above all others, of her beloved Henry.

Honest Zachary, little less delighted than his patient at this unexpected meeting, now let out the circumstance, hitherto suppressed by Henry, of the action Cary had had, which he had picked up by report upon the road, but prudently forebore to speak of. This forced our hero upon a narrative of the whole affair, in which he took not the glory to himself that was due, but in all other particulars was a very correct relater of facts. Zachary now began his journal, and travelled very circumstantially

stantially from London to Falmouth, commenting upon his own sagacious proceedings by the way, to which he very justly ascribed the success that had hitherto crowned his operations; and certain it was, the health and strength of the lady did not appear, to Henry's observation, to have suffered much, if any diminution by the journey. A restorative was now administered, on which Zachary descanted with much learning, and at the same time pronounced, that a repose of some days would be indispensable for her Ladyship's safety, before she embarked on board the packet. A fresh supply of certain drugs being wanted, he sallied forth in search of a proper shop, from whence to replenish his stock. As soon as he was gone, the mother being left with her son, threw her arms about his neck, and gave full vent to those exquisite sensations which nature and affection, hitherto repressed, had implanted in her soul. Moments so free and mutually delicious they had never yet enjoyed; they exchanged embraces and mingled tears, till Henry, recollecting that even joy may be too violent, gently extricated himself from her embrace, rose from her feet where he was kneeling, and having seated himself at her side, clasping one of her hands in his, she began a conversation, which will be recorded in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

Friends long divided meet at last.

"I HAVE received a letter," said the Lady Crowbery, "from my uncle Manstock, which occasioned me to make a longer stay in Lon-

don than I should else have made; it obliged me to send down my lawyer, to receive from his hands the packet containing my will and other papers, which I had deposited with him. What particular reasons he had for declining a trust, that he had willingly accepted, is matter of conjecture only; but I suppose they proceed from some suspicion entertained of your attachment to Isabella, and her's to you, for which he is probably indebted to the kind suggestions of his friend Mr. Claypole, from whose resentment, upon being refused the living of our lamented Ratcliffe, I have every thing malicious to expect. If, then, my uncle will surrender up his understanding to that unworthy guide, can I help it? I have appointed my executor, and shall put into your hands a copy of my will, with full directions where to apply for the original, which I have lodged with Mr. G——, of Gray's Inn, a man in whose integrity the most sacred trust may be reposed. But how far this change of opinion in Sir Roger Manstock may affect his amiable daughter is a question of very serious concern; for, if I understand his letter rightly, you are put under absolute proscription; nor do I expect she will be allowed to correspond with me, unless my letters are submitted to inspection before they reach her hands; and as for her writing to me, I do not suppose she will be suffered to do it on any account; you see, therefore, in what light you stand; and, according to your own feelings, must either prepare yourself for mortification and disappointment, if you persist in thinking of her; or, if you can let your judgment over-rule your passion, you will divert your thoughts from a pursuit that now seems hopeless; for to attempt at detaching Isabella from the strict observance of her father's commands is an undertaking as impracticable as it would be dishonourable."

"That

"That is an attempt," replied Henry, "I shall never make; for that would be to ruin myself both in her esteem and my own. Interdicted by her father, I am excluded from all hope, at the same time, if I know my own heart, I know that time can work no change in it's affections; and if I am totally to despair of Isabella, so long as it shall please Heaven to impose upon a wretched creature life bereft of all happiness, so long I shall, with all the resignation that becomes me, endure the dispensation; for it is not my nature to rebel against my Creator."

"I perceive," said the mother, "that your love, my dear Henry, lies deep, and is immoveable; hasty passions waste themselves in vehement assertions; the flame burns out, and there's an end to them, but your's is fixed deliberate approbation, therefore I shall not argue against it; on the contrary, I must confess to you, that before I parted from Isabella, I confided to her the secret of your birth; I owned myself your mother, and disclosed to her the whole purport of those papers, which I deposited with her father, to be opened only on the event of my decease. She knows you, therefore, for the son of Delapoer, the heir to my estate, and, perhaps, of his fortune, if he has returned, as I am informed, without connections, and in affluent circumstances. In her heart, therefore, I should flatter myself you will keep your place, unless my uncle should extort from her any promise to your absolute exclusion. In the meantime, I could wish, before I die, to obtain, if possible, an interview with your father, who is unconscious of your existence, and which might have taken place, but for the provoking oversight of honest Cawdle, who forgot to give you my note with the ring. Whilst I was in London, I cau-

sed enquiry to be made after Delapoer; I was informed he remained unmarried, had preserved an excellent character, and brought home a respectable fortune, very honourably acquired; he was not in town, nor was it exactly known where he was gone, for he had neither house nor servants in London, and the report was, that he was going out of England for the winter, to a warmer climate. It occurs to me, therefore, that if he has heard of my being ordered to Lisbon, he may possibly make that his point."

"And should you be well pleased if it was so?" demanded Henry.—"I confess to you, I should not be sorry," replied the lady, "for the reasons I have already stated."—"Then I may venture to inform you," said Henry, "that he was with me in the chaise when I met you on the road." At these words the blood rushed into the cheeks of the feeble invalid, her eyes sparkled with joy, and she exclaimed with unusual energy, "How wonderful are the ways of Providence! What an unexpected blessing, that I am now permitted to be a happy instrument of a discovery like this! Let me see him without loss of time; let me not postpone, even for an hour, a duty so important, an opportunity so graciously offered. I take for granted, you have not declared yourself to him." He assured her he had not. "Then run for him," she cried, "bring him to me this instant; nature struggles at my heart, and will not be restrained."

Henry was gone whilst the words were on her lips: she immediately gave orders to her servants to prevent interruption, and then began to collect her thoughts for the awful interview. Whilst she reflected on the extraordinary combination of events that had brought about this unexpected meeting, it inspired her to hope, that Heaven had sealed her
pardon

pardon for the past offences of her youth, and brought her sufferings to a period. When she endeavoured to put her thoughts into some form of words, and prepare for the discovery she had to make, she found herself incapable of arranging her ideas, and gave up the attempt. "It is in vain," she cried, "to meditate on what I am to say; I must leave it to nature and the impulse of the moment." And now the voice of Henry in the house warned her of his approach; and soon she heard the steps of two men upon the stairs; when the door being opened, presented to her view the sickly and emaciated form of Delapoer, leaning on the arm of his conductor, trembling as he advanced towards her, and panting for breath through faintness and agitation. Henry instantly retired: not a word was uttered by either of the parties; she made an effort to raise herself from her seat, but sunk back, and, putting her hands before her face, burst into tears. There was a chair beside her, in which Delapoer sat down. "How shall I express my thanks to you," he said, after a short pause, "for this indulgence? Providence seems to have brought us together, by the most extraordinary means, in the last scene of our life's sad tragedy, that we may once more exchange a parting look upon the ruins of time before we separate to our unchangeable destinations. Your lot, my ever-beloved lady, I am persuaded will be blest; you have laboured much, and will reap abundantly. I snatched a sight of you at Crowbery; it was too much for an exhausted frame; I have been sinking ever since; for I heard you was unhappy and my heart rose against your tyrant, tho' discretion stopt my hand. I passed several days about the pultrious of your castle, disguising both my name and habit, lest I might awaken the suspicion of your gaoler: I met

I met that excellent young man, who accompanied me hither, and sent you a pledge by his hands, which I thought you would understand as a token I was yet alive. Ever since the inexorable decree that tore us from each other, I have been struggling with my hard fortune, in the hope of earning, by my sword and services, a competency to enable me to return an independent man; but alas! a variety of crosses and misfortunes bore so strong upon me for a course of eighteen years, that, until the last few months of my abode in India, I was toiling against the stream of adversity; at length, one lucky expedition, of which I had the conduct, presented to me the alternative of enormous plunder with a guilty conscience, or moderate earnings with a clear one; I chose the latter, and am now returned, affluent in circumstances, and, I thank God, irreproachable in character. Never, during this tedious period, did the eye of beauty, Indian or English, draw aside one thought, one wish, one, even the slightest, regard, from the center where first love, and the memory of my ever-adored Cecilia, had fixt it for life. The vow that I had made, so sealed, so sanctified, so rivetted into the very heart of honour, was to me a marriage vow—but, I perceive, I give you pain; let me not do that; my expressions, tho' strong, were only binding on myself; you was not free; you had a father, whom you was forced to obey, and, I implore you to believe they were not pointed against your proceeding; I can well suppose your marriage with a wretch like Crowbery was a compulsory one."

"It was, indeed," replied she, raising her eyes for the first time, and turning them upon him in the most affecting manner, "it was imposed upon me, not only as a command which I could not disobey,

obey, but as an atonement for an offence, which I could no otherwise expiate."

"Gracious Heaven!" he exclaimed, "and was my unhappy Cecilia made to atone for an offence, for which I, vile betrayer as I was, am alone responsible? It is I, then, who am the source of all your sorrows; I, to whose unceasing solicitations your kind heart at last reluctantly gave way; I have been the hateful cause of all your sufferings, like the deceiver of our first parents, the father of all evil."

"Not so," rejoined she hastily, "say, rather, you have been the father of my only blessing."

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed, in a tone of impatience and surprise. "Speak to me, I beseech you, without reserve; lead me the straightest way to truth, for you have stirred a thought within my heart that will not bear evasion or delay. Am I a father? answer me."

"You are, you are a father," she replied, "and Henry is your son."

As she spoke these words, Delapoer's senses seemed lost in astonishment; he smote his hands together in a transport of joy, gazed upon her eagerly for a while, then cast his eyes to heaven; his lips moved, but no voice was heard; then throwing himself back in his chair, he seemed lost in meditation, till, roused to sudden recollection, he adjured her, in the most solemn terms, to confirm the truth of what she had told him by an appeal to Heaven. "I take Heaven to witness," she replied, "to the truth of what I have said; conscious as I am that the judge is at the door, in whose presence I must soon appear, I repeat to you, at the peril of my soul were I capable of deceit, that Henry is your son and mine."—"I am satisfied," cried Delapoer

lapoer; and, dropping on his knees, broke forth into prayers and praises to the Supreme Disposer of all events. She then imparted to him the purport of her will, and briefly related what had passed between her uncle and herself since her departure from Manstock. When he found she had confided the secret to no one but Isabella, except Henry himself and Zachary, who was professionally made privy to it, he paused for some time, and then demanded, why he alone might not stand forth to the world as the father of Henry, without committing her name in any future time. "Let it remain a mystery," he said; "or, at most, a surmise. Why shou'd we give that triumph to the malice of Lord Crowbery? why shou'd we put to shame the family pride of Sir Roger Manstock? I have fortune enough to bestow upon my son; and the first lawyer that is capable of drawing a deed of gift shall secure the reversion of my whole property to him. As for your paternal estate, bequeath it in it's natural course, so that no suspicion rest upon your memory."

"Your suggestion," said the lady, "is truly generous; but it is far too important to be adopted without due reflection: my uncle Manstock has but one child, and she a daughter; she is already superabundantly endow'd; and to accumulate estates upon the heiress of that wealthy house, is mere supererogation; unless our Henry, who is master of her affections, was as much in favour with the father."

"Cannot it be left conditionally, upon her marrying Henry?" said Delapoer.—Lady Crowbery shook her head, and remarked, that this would little differ, in appearance to the world, from an absolute bequest to him. "Yet if I cou'd depend,"

pend," added she, "upon her attachment to Henry, or, rather, I shou'd say, upon her father's consent, all might be well; and my son, thro' her medium, wou'd still be my heir: but there is little reliance on my uncle, whilst he is under influence hostile to my wishes."

"Did you not say," he rejoined, "that Miss Manstock was privy to the secret of our Henry's birth? If so, it is to be presum'd, you have perfect confidence in her honour; you also believe she is attach'd to him, else you wou'd not have trusted her with an unnecessary secret: how then can this young lady, knowing Henry to be your son, act otherwise by your estate than either share it with him as his wife, or restore it to him as your heir?"

"There is much argument," she replied, "in what you say; and, I believe, more true honour does not exist in a human heart, than in my cousin Isabella's; but, after all, we must talk with Henry." This was the most immediate wish of Delapoer's heart, who was longing to embrace a son justly so dear to him;—and now he related to Lady Crowbery the whole narrative of the action, dwelling with rapture upon the bravery and humanity of our hero: the sensations it produced in a mother's heart need not be described, and it is well they need not, for I should doubt if they can.

In short, we hold our readers in too much respect to sicken them with our descriptive powers, convinced that there is no incident arising from this history, or any other of the kind which may not be referred to their feelings in natural language, without those tedious circumlocutory embellishments, which only serve to load the page. I trust they will not think the worse of my females, if they are not drowned in floods of tears upon

every occasion, or fall into fainting fits with excess of sensibility; for to such as are pleased with these tricks we do not write, contented to devote our labours to the friends of nature, and to them alone.

CHAPTER VII.

Our Hero is restored to both his Parents.

OUR readers need not be reminded, that the hero of this history knew Delapoe to be his father before he was called to a conference upon the proposal stated in the preceding chapter. The meeting took place in lady Crowbery's presence; and the nameless foundling, whom adversity had so lately crushed, now heard himself acknowledged, and felt the animating pressure of a parental embrace, by turns bestowed upon him, with praises, prayers and blessings, superadded in abundance.

"Son," cried Lady Crowbery, "it has now pleas'd Heaven to let me see this hour, which closes every wish that my fond heart conceiv'd, and blesses me beyond what I have ever merited, or can compute. I have lived to place you in the protection of a father, I have surviv'd to behold you clasp'd in his embrace; and what can I say—but that the transport is unutterable? A term of life beyond what may suffice to execute the few maternal ties that are yet unfinished, is what I dare not, what I do not pray for. Let us not therefore loiter, for the time is short; let us work while it is day, for darkness and death are at hand. There is a business to be done, upon which I must consult

consult you. My paternal estate is, as you know, in my disposal; it is your's: on whom but on my son can I bestow it?"—"Not so," replied Henry; "bestowing it on me, you avow me as your son, and bequeath your name to detraction and disgrace. Suppose (which Heaven forbid!) Lord Crowbery survives you, what will he say? outrageous insult to your memory will ensue: this may be repell'd, you'll say; but what can be oppos'd to Sir Roger Manstock's discontent? If he will not suffer you to leave a paper in his hands, upon the suspicion only of my name being found in it, how will he resent a will, that is to make me the heir of your estate, to the exclusion of his family?"—"And if Isabella inherits it," said the mother, "what then?"—"Then she who best deserves it, has it, replied Henry; "and as no earthly blessing can accrue to me, but what originates with her, you put my fate into her hands, who is the mistress of it, whether you so consider her, or not. To her I am known; by her alone I can be made happy; if I have any interest dear to me upon earth, it is to recommend myself to her thoughts; and therefore, what can best do that, is best for my interest: let the lovely Isabella then possess what she is entitled to, of which, if any share devolves to me, let her bestow it with herself: I cannot be too rich in fortune's gifts, with Isabella to partake of them; without her I shall be beyond the reach of fortune, nothing can lessen or augment my wretchedness."

"Oh, my dear son," cried Delapoer, "how perfectly you speak my sentiments! I adopt your reasoning, nay, rather, I anticipate it, for it is exactly what I recommended to your beloved mother. I have enough, and all I have is your's."

The

The business was no further pressed, for the conference had been long, and Lady Crowbery seemed exhausted: she was silent, but it was a silence that betokened acquiescence. As the business could not be done to her satisfaction without the presence of her confidential lawyer Mr. G——, who was in possession of papers, which, according to this plan, it behoved her to cancel, she determined to write to him by express, and request him to come down to her, if his business admitted of it, in person, else to dispatch some trusty and sufficient proxy, who might act in his place: the intermediate time was not longer than seemed requisite for her case, which now became more and more doubtful: for Zachary, who began to assume a very pensive aspect, had taken a medical assessor into council, and both joined in pronouncing that unless some favourable and speedy change took place, the project of embarking her for Lisbon must be abandoned. Delapoer and Henry saw these inauspicious symptoms in the same melancholy light, and drew the most desponding conclusions from them. One evening, when they were in anxious expectation of Mr. G——, Henry, perceiving that his mother would be glad to dispense with Zachary's attendance, drew him aside, and, walking down to the beach, began to question him about his patient, expressing himself as without hope of her recovery, and under momentary terrors of her immediate dissolution. To this Zachary replied, that although he saw that sad event in approach, and, in his own judgment, regarded it as inevitable, yet he conjectured that she would have a gradual and lingering dismissal out of life, without pain or loss of senses; and that no rapid, or immediate, dissolution was to be apprehended. "I hope therefore," added

ded he, "our dear lady will yet find time and capacity to settle her affairs to your satisfaction and advantage, and put you in a situation to propose for the loveliest girl in England, to whom, I perceive, you are very seriously attach'd." No answer being returned to this, he proceeded—"For my own part, I am persuaded there is no love lost between you, as the saying is; and if you have left your heart with Miss Manstock in pledge, you have taken her's away with you in possession; for I am no indifferent physiognomist, and not apt to be out in my conjectures as to the human heart. I had a little private talk with the young lady during our halt at Manstock House; and, I believe, my friend, I did your cause no harm by what I said on that occasion."—"The less you said, the better," Henry coldly replied.—"Come, come, young gentleman," resumed Zachary, "you are too modest, too diffident; it is not the first time you have stood in your own light with the ladies; And that puts me in mind of my poor boozy dame, who has now, I suppose drank up her drink, and sleeps in peace. Alexander Kinloch writes me word, and I have this morning receiv'd his letter, that she is absolutely at death's door. Well! God's will be done; I must bear it with christian patience; *Mors omnibus communis*."—Here the Doctor took out his handkerchief, and, in conformity to custom upon such occasions, applied it to his eyes: where, if there had been a tear, no doubt the aforesaid handkerchief would have done its duty, and disposed of it. "But I must prepare myself to expect the worst," added he; "for if death be at the door, and none but Sawney Kinloch to keep him out, why 'tis natural to conclude, that all is over with my poor dame. To be sure she had her failings, as who
has

has not? but custom familiariz'd me to them. She certainly made some trips in point of fidelity to my bed, but then she was over-partial to the brandy-bottle, and that accounts for her incontinence, you know, very naturally. She was a little over righteous, it must be own'd, and saddled me with the saints rather more than was agreeable; but then her religion was mere hypocrisy, so that I cou'd not quarrel with her on that account. She was something of a termagant, I cannot deny; told a pretty many untruths, and bred a pretty many disturbances in my family; but then she did the same by all her neighbours as by me, so that I had no cause in particular to complain of her; and, upon the whole, have as much reason to regret the loss of my wife, as most husbands have to lament for their's."

"Well, my good master," said Henry smiling, "notwithstanding all these good qualities which you have counted up, I am in hopes you'll bear your loss with tolerable composure, and that your days to come will not pass the less to your content because you have no longer a wife in existence, who answers to the description you have been giving: At least I hope life may be tolerable, tho' you have neither sot, slut, nor shrew in your house, to entertain you: and as the time, I fear is not far off, when you will have a real friend to lament, I foresee that your professional cares will not long survive your domestic ones, and in that case you will have to look out for a successor in your business. Shou'd that be the case, and shou'd Alexander Kinloch not be the man that answers to your wishes, I beg you will let me recommend to you a friend of mine, for whose sufficiency, in all respects, I will make myself responsible: the person I speak of is your quondam

dam assistant, Mr. William Williams, at present Surgeon of Captain Cary's frigate, a man very highly to be esteem'd for his private character, and of whose abilities, in every branch of his profession, I am bold to promise, you may be furnish'd with the strongest testimonials."—To this Zachary replied, that he had a very high opinion of Williams, and without hesitation should prefer him to every other proponent, not only in respect to Henry's good wishes for him, but on the score of his own merit: as for the old Scotchman, he protested against him in any other capacity than as a cheap drudge at the mortar, if Williams chose to continue him there, which however he should not be very forward to advise.

This matter being adjusted to Henry's satisfaction, he now perceived a chaise and four stop at Lady Crowbery's door; and running to it, had the gratification of finding that Mr. G——himself had complied with that Lady's request, and come down in person. A short conversation with that excellent man soon opened to him a character, in which integrity is so prominent, that nature, in the formation of it, seemed determined so to place her work as that no one should overlook or mistake it. It will suffice therefore to say, that every thing was done, according to the will of the testatrix, which method in business and correctness in form could effect: the same opportunity also served for Mr. Delapoe to make his promised settlement on his son our hero; and this being done, our honest lawyer (and as such we venture to pronounce him one of the worthiest members of the community) returned to his station in life; where we hope he will long abide, to protect the property of his clients, and enliven the society of his friends.

CHAPTER VIII.

A gentle Being drops into the Grave.

A FEW days had passed after the departure of Mr. G——, when the Lady Crowbery, perceiving her small remains of strength hourly on the decline, communicated to her friends her total abandonment of all hope of stirring from the spot she was in; at the same time expressing her acquiescence in the call of Providence, and the thankfulness with which she should obey the summons, in the presence of those who were dearest to her in this world. She still found strength, by intervals, to write a farewell letter to her unworthy Lord, also one of a very affectionate cast to her uncle Manstock, both which she committed to the post: to Isabella she likewise wrote, on a subject more important to her than that of taking leave for life, as it respected the future happiness of her beloved son, and explained (in terms, however, the most delicate) her implied hopes and views in the disposition she had made of her estate; and this letter she put into Henry's hands, referring it to his discretion in what manner, and at what period, to make use of it.

To Zachary Cawdle she bequeathed an annuity of three hundred pounds a year, chargeable upon her estate, to be paid quarterly and punctually. In small legacies to servants, and charitable donations, a further sum was involved, for which due provision was made, and direction given. Of Henry no mention was to be found in her will; but both to him and his father she gave, with her own

own hands, several little articles, valuable only as tokens of affection and pledges of remembrance. Every thing that personally belonged to her in Crowbery Castle, of which she had many particulars, were left to the lord of that mansion; the residue was bequeathed in trust to Sir Roger Manstock, for the use and benefit of Isabella, without entail, and at her free disposal, when she should attain the age of eighteen years, of which there yet remained some months only before her non-age should expire.

Neither her senses nor spirits seemed to yield at the approach of death; every morning she was conveyed from her bed to a couch in her sitting-room, which had a pleasant view of the sea and shore. Here she was constantly attended by one or both of her beloved friends, whose tender assiduities cheered her to her latest moments; she took particular delight in listening to Delapoer's narrative of his adventures in India, which he contrived to render both interesting and entertaining to her, introducing it at such times only as she seemed to call for it, and in such proportions as might not weary her attention, or too forcibly agitate her feelings.—She also, in her turn, had a story to relate, which, though told with great mitigation towards Lord Crowbery, and with the suppression of many cruel circumstances in his conduct, and sufferings on her part, was not always heard with the temper and patience that she wish'd to inspire. Delapoer, in spite of all his caution, would sometimes give way to the warmth of his natural character, and once or twice, to her sensible regret, broke forth into menaces and denunciations. These she would, with anxious solicitude, strive to qualify and repress. "If you love me, Delapoer," she would say, "you will remember

remember my words after death, and not disgrace my memory, or disturb my spirit in the grave, by a revengeful and violent proceeding towards Lord Crowbery. Had he been indulgent and kind to me, how severely would my conscience have reproach'd me! and if, on the contrary, he has been somewhat harsh and ungentle, cannot you recollect enough, both committed and omitted on my part, to extenuate, if not to warrant, his unkindness? You'll say my marriage was a compulsory one—'tis true it was so; but still I was a party, tho' a most unwilling one, in the imposition that was put upon him: in my heart he never could obtain a place; I paid him obedience—I had no more to bestow."

The last conversation of this sort she had with Delapoer was on the evening preceding the day on which she died: she was fervent in prayer that her errors might be pardoned, and, in the most solemn manner, conjured him to conspire with her in atonement, by giving double diligence to the performance of those duties which their joint offence had entailed upon them in the person of their son. Whilst she was thus addressing him, Delapoer, who was supporting her as she fate erect on the couch, perceived a convulsive symptom in the muscles about her mouth, which gave him instant alarm; and the eager look with which he pursued his observation, convinced her that some change had happened in her features to occasion it.—"Ah! my dear friend," she said, "I understand your looks, I am dying; perhaps I am disfigur'd; if so, leave me, I implore you; do not let the last impression of this face, which you once beheld with pleasure, remain upon your memory with disgust and horror. If I am fit to be seen, let me thus expire, supported in your arms;
if

if not, farewell for ever; let my servants be call'd, and let me not shock either you or my son with an object so distressing." As she faintly uttered these words she put up her hands before her face, which Delapoer gently clasped in his, assuring her, that her suspicion was unfounded, and that her features indicated no such symptoms as she apprehended. He soon after rung the bell, when Henry entered hastily, followed by Zachary and two female attendants: Henry threw himself on his knees by the side of her couch, and continued for some minutes enfolded in her arms, in speechless agony; for he also perceived the change, and saw the hand of death was upon her. A convulsive tremor now seized her whole frame, and she sunk down on her couch insensible, while the Doctor exhorted them to leave her to the care of himself and the women. Through the remainder of the night she dosed with short intervals, in which she appeared to have some degree of recollection, but never uttered a word or seemed to experience a pain; at an early hour of the morning, she drew her last sigh and expired. The father and the son were standing by the side of the bed at that awful moment, and the smile, which love impressed upon her features, as her eyes caught a parting sight of them, before they closed for ever, remained after death, as if to tell the beholders that her soul, unwilling to derange the beautiful frame in which it had been encased, had left its peace behind it, whilst it conveyed itself away to the mansions of immortality and bliss.

CHAPTER IX.

*Our History presents a Scene, not very flattering to
Human Nature.*

WE have now closed the history of the amiable but unhappy Lady Crowbery, and we would fain hope that such of our readers as are parents, will think the moral of her fate not unworthy of their consideration and reflection.

One of the first duties that devolved upon her afflicted friends, was to give information of the mournful event to her absent connections. This business was undertaken by Doctor Zachary, who immediately penned a respectful epistle to Sir Roger Manstock; and also one in like terms to the Lord Viscount Crowbery, which were sent off by express.

Delapoer and his son determined upon staying by the remains of their lamented friend, till orders should be received from Lord Crowbery respecting the funeral; and Henry took an early opportunity of making his friend Captain Carey acquainted with the sad event, that had now occasioned him to decline all thoughts of rejoining the victorious frigate. The return of the post brought him the following answer from that gallant officer:—

“My dear friend,

“I loved and respected my relation Lady Crowbery, as much as I despise and abhor the wretch who not only shortened but embittered her day; and I lament her sad fate and your loss, from the bottom of my heart. Bear up, however, my brave fellow, and when you are weary of the shore, remember you have a mess-mate,
“who

“ who so long as he has a plank to float on, will
“ be proud to approve himself your’s on all occasi-
“ ons most sincerely and affectionately,
“ ——— Carey.”

The messenger in the mean time, who was charged with the mournful tidings of his lady’s death proceeded on his way with all possible expedition; and according to his instructions first presented himself at the castle of his Lord, and delivered his dispatch. It was received and read in the company of the Reverend Mr. Claypole and Miss Fanny; the former of whom had deputed himself with all possible address, and enjoyed the satisfaction of contemplating the flattering prospect, that every hour brought nearer to his view, from the encreasing attachment of that noble personage to his amiable niece. An uncle, more sensitive to appearances, or less persuaded of the purity of the female character, might have proved a troublesome guest to a nobleman of his Lordship’s irritable feelings at certain moments, when the vehemence of his passion carried him beyond the bounds, which some people of more rigid notions would have thought a little on the outside of discretion; but Mr. Claypole was not one of these formal disciplinarians, and accommodated himself to times and seasons with admirable facility. With a soul superior to suspicion, he heeded not those innocent dalliances that passed between the lovers, whilst he had the resource of a book, or a walk, and sometimes of a nap in his chair, to fill up an hour when conversation was suspended, and dumb-show took place of dialogue.

Captain Crowbery was upon a visit to a friend in a distant country, so that the society of the castle was very much confined, and their harmony seldom

seldom if ever interrupted by the intrusion of unwelcome visitors. Miss Fanny possessed the apartment of the absent lady, and had already made some arrangements in the disposition and furniture of it, which she asserted, and my Lord acknowledged, to be very striking improvements. Two or three old domestics, who had considered themselves as appertaining to the lady of the house, were now very naturally regarded as supernumeraries; and upon a principle of œconomy, which the Reverend Mr. Claypole took all proper occasions to inculcate, were paid off and dismissed. One or two of these, who had belonged to Lady Crowbery's family from their youth, and were past the age of service, were entertained by Sir Roger Manstock, and charitably enrolled amongst his band of pensioners; the others sought their livelihood where they could find it. By an arrangement with the parson of Crowbery, the Reverend Mr. Claypole took the duty of that parish upon himself, and transferred to him the service of the church at Manstock; to which Sir Roger very willingly accorded, from motives, that in candour we must acknowledge to have had some respect to his own ease and convenience, as well as to the aforesaid Mr. Claypole's. No intercourse whatever had in the mean time passed between the allied houses of Crowbery and Manstock; few souls were less akin than those of their owners and their respective associates.

No charge could be laid against Mother Nature, for having misapplied her workmanship upon the mould in which she had cast the person of Lord Crowbery; nay, on the contrary, it should seem she had both tempered and modelled it with the most accurate attention, and harmonized it to the
soul

soul which it enveloped with the nicest art. No man of common observation could receive a false impression of his Lordship's character from the first glance of his exterior. Nature had not given to him the outward semblance of any one virtue, dignity or endowment, which he did not mentally possess; neither was there one moral failing or defect to be found in the journal of his life, which might not figuratively be said to stand recorded in the title-page of that history: In short, if he had had hypocrisy enough to affect the manners of a gentleman, nobody but a fool would have been capable of being duped by him.

This accomplished Peer, though not quite fitted in all particulars to fill up the vacancy which Henry had left in the soft heart of Miss Fanny, nevertheless was encouraged by that young lady to believe that he was in absolute possession of it. To develop her motives for deceiving him into this opinion might be an unpleasant investigation; but when we have said that ambition and revenge were of the party, it is not necessary to search for others to make up the number. This young lady and his Lordship were just then engaged in conversation on a very interesting topic, whilst the Rev. Mr. Claypole had dropt asleep on a sofa that filled up a recess in the room; when the servant arrived from Falmouth with the letter, which announced the death of Lady Crowbery. His Lordship read it with a countenance, that did not indicate any of those weaknesses, which human nature sometimes is betrayed into upon a sudden surprise. He perused it with a steady eye, folded it up again with a firm hand, and putting it into his pocket, in a tone of voice which abated nothing of its usual energy, coolly observed, that the expected

pected event was come to pass—Lady Crowbery was dead.

Miss Fanny started from her seat, with an exclamation very frequently applied by ladies of her fashion, to express either joy, sorrow, surprize or any other passion, that attacks their gentle spirits unawares. At the same instant the reverend sleeper sprung from his couch, ready prepared to second any emotion that his noble friend might be pleased to express, either of joy or sorrow: his noble friend did not as yet discover to which party he was disposed to incline, therefore Mr. Claypole judiciously kept silence, and held his faculties suspended in a neutral state, till circumstances should determine them. “I guess’d how this scheme to Lisbon wou’d end,” cried the Peer.—“Yes,” replied the Parson, “I suspected it wou’d terminate as it has done, when that booby of an apothecary took upon him the charge of her Ladyship’s constitution.”—“A pretty fellow truly,” resumed my Lord, “to be travelling physician to a woman of quality! but I can understand nothing from his letter, but that his patient has slipp’d through his hands; therefore, with your leave, I shall step into my library, and try what information may be gather’d from the messenger.”—This said, he rose from his chair, and calmly stalked out of the room.

The uncle and niece were now set free from all restraint, and soon began to let loose their sentiments upon this interesting event, without reserve:—“I judg’d her case to be desperate,” cried the uncle: “she was a lost woman when I saw her at Manstock. I cannot say she gave me any great reason to lament her loss: if I ever had any obligations to her, she cancel’d them all by her last haughty treatment of me, when I modestly made

suit

suit for the poor favour of succeeding Parson Ratcliffe." To this the niece made no answer, nor indeed had she paid any attention, as her mind was just then engaged in computing the period of a widower's first mourning; and as this meditation involved her in some dilemma, she abruptly appealed to her uncle, whether it was totally out of form for his Lordship to be married, before he was out of weepers and black gloves: "That is as it may be," replied the uncle, "some people judge in those matters with more liberality and latitude than others; I am no great critic in forms, but this I know, that the sooner you bring his Lordship to the point, my dear Fanny, the better;"—"Why that is done already," cried the Lady elect, "the point is carried, and I have his honour in pledge; else can you suppose I wou'd admit?"—"Certainly not," cried Claypole, interrupting her; "I cannot doubt but you know the ground you are upon, and therefore it is that I have never interpos'd my advice; but now that there is no longer any obstacle, I shou'd recommend you to hold back, till he fulfils his engagements: a seasonable reserve may quicken desire, too much kindness may chance to quell it."—"I believe," cried the niece, "I am fully capable of conducting myself in this affair, without resorting to an adviser; where there is no passion at the heart, it is not likely there shou'd be any error in the judgment, and I flatter myself you do me justice to believe, I am not in love with the person of Lord Crowbery: he is not a Henry to catch the eye or engage the heart, but he is a Peer of England, has a good estate and a noble castle, which, when I am the mistress of, I confess the triumph it will give me over that provoking chit Isabella, whom I hate and detest at

my heart, will not be amongst the least of my enjoyments."

Lord Crowbery, in the meantime, having asked a few trifling questions of the bearer of the letter, dismissed him, and sent for his agent lawyer Ferret, to whom he dictated the following lines, by way of answer to the questions referred to him in Zachary's dispatch:

" Mr. Cawdle,

" Sir,

" I am commanded by the Lord Viscount
 " Crowbery to say, that he has receiv'd your's
 " of the 19th ultimo, informing him of the death
 " of your patient on the morning of that day.
 " With respect to your further enquiries, touching
 " the burial ceremonies, his Lordship bids me tell
 " you he has no answer to give: the heir or heirs
 " of the deceas'd, whoever they may be, will act
 " as they see fit in the case: you have no instructions to expect from him.

" I am, Sir,

" your humble servant,

JOHN JEFFERY FERRET."

CHAPTER X.

The Scene is shifted to Manslock House.

WHEN the messenger arrived at Manslock House, Sir Roger was just returned home from the county town, where he had been unanimously elected representative in parliament. The mournful news caused deep affliction both to him and

and the sensitive Isabella; the same servant was charged with a verbal message from Lord Cwibery, signifying that he declined interfering with any wishes Sir Roger might have, respecting the place of burial and the disposal of the remains; he added, that when the will was opened he presumed he should have notice. Sir Roger well understood the spirit of this message, and properly felt both the insult and the meanness it implied. The instant he could compose his thoughts sufficiently for the purpose he wrote to Zachary Cawdle, requiring him to transmit the body with all proper decorum and attendance, fitting the quality of the deceased by easy stages to the family vault of her ancestors, at her paternal seat of Hagley Hall, where himself and his daughter purposed to be in waiting to receive it, and to pay the last honours to the corpse of his most dear and lamented niece. The business this involved him in, had probably the effect of occupying so much of his time and thoughts, that grief had the less opportunity of fixing upon him; but the tender Isabella, who had not so full a share of those avocations, surrendered herself to melancholy and desponding meditations. In her breast also there was lodged a secret of most serious import; and in the mean time she had no instructions how to dispose of it; these she expected to receive by some hand or other, but what to wish she knew not; whether they should be to impart it to her father, or still to conceal it from him, was an alternative that offered nothing to her reflection, but difficulties and distresses on both sides: that Henry should be left heir to his mother's estate was naturally to be expected, but how he could be named or described in her will, without a discovery of his birth, was what she could not comprehend: the papers that had been written for her

father's inspection after her cousin's death, she knew had been destroyed, and that purpose revoked: she apprehended, therefore, that some order would come to her for divulging it to Sir Roger; and this was a task which of all earthly undertakings was most dreadful to her: In the mean time the preparations were put forward for the journey, and servants were dispatched beforehand to get the house in order to receive them, and to set on foot all the preliminary ceremonies for a respectable and splendid funeral.

In this interval arrived Mr. G—— with the will, and his coming was most seasonable, for it was on the very eve of Sir Roger's setting out on his journey. This event was immediately communicated to Lord Crowbery, and with the messenger, who carried Sir Roger's note to his Lordship, returned not the principal himself, but his representative Mr. John Jeffery Ferret, attorney at law and agent to the noble Peer aforesaid.

The arrival of this august personage being announced, the Baronet with his fair daughter, and the respectable holder and maker of the will, assembled in the book-room, and were soon honoured with the presence of Mr. Ferret, before whom the seals, after being submitted to his inspection, were solemnly broken open, and the will distinctly and audibly read by Mr. G——. The signatures, seals, dates, and every other particular, were minutely examined by the said Mr. Ferret, who was asked by Mr. G—— if he was satisfied as to what he had seen and heard; to which, after due time for recollection, he gravely replied, "In point of form I see nothing at present to object to, in point of essence I shall decline giving any answer till I have advised with counsel. This lady died in an obscure and distant corner of the island,

island, the will is also dated not many days previous to her decease, it will be requisite to ascertain, that the testatrix was actually and *bonâ fide* of sound mind and judgment at the time of her signing the said will; understand me not, I pray you, as insinuating any thing to the contrary, but being a professional man yourself, you will admit the reasonableness of what I say, which is no more than my duty to my principal requires of me;—"I believe your principal," replied Mr. G——, "received a letter from the testatrix, written throughout with her own hand, since the date of this will, which if he is not disposed to refer to, Sir Roger Manstock, I am persuaded, has one of as late a date to produce, which will testify to her capacity, together with other proofs, which will be forth-coming whenever you are instructed to call for them: in short, Sir, we shall be ready to meet you in any way you shall think fit to require of us."

During this conversation Sir Roger sat in silent astonishment to find the purport of the will so contrary to his expectations, inasmuch as the name or description of Henry was no where mentioned, nor any bequest whatever specified, that could by any implication refer to him, whilst the agitation it occasioned in the bosom of Isabella was such, that unable to keep her seat, she rose, and demanded of Mr. G—— if she might not be permitted to leave the room, which being answered in the affirmative, she lost no time to avail herself of, and hastened away. "I perceive," said lawyer Ferret, "that my Lord Crowbery has no further interest in this will, than what respects a few personals appertaining to the deceas'd, left behind her in the castle, of which perhaps a query might be made as to her Ladyship's right of disposal."

sal:—"That's a query," cried Mr. G——, "we have no concern with; it can only affect yourselves, therefore you'll manage it in your own way."—"I perceive also," resumed Ferret with some surprize, "here is no mention made of a certain young man, whom we in these parts expected to find remembered by her Ladyship at her death, having seen him so much favour'd by her in her life time." Upon this Sir Roger rose from his seat, and addressing himself to Mr. G—— said, "I humbly conceive, Sir, if this gentleman has no legal observations to state, we are not bound to listen to any others, and may break up the meeting." Mr. G—— having made sign of assent, the Baronet departed without further ceremony, and lawyer Ferret having put in his claim for a copy of the will, called for his horse and set forward on the spur, to report his proceedings at the place from whence he came.

This business being ended, Mr. G—— joined the Baronet and the heiress, who were expecting him in the adjoining room. Sir Roger began the conversation, by expressing himself very greatly surpris'd at the purport of his niece's bequest of her entire estate to his daughter: "Nay, I must fairly declare to you," added he, "that I am at a loss how to reconcile myself to the justice of it. The remark which that impertinent attorney made, upon the total silence observed towards a certain young man, who to my knowledge was encouraged to expect a provision, was a very natural one in itself, though out of place in his mouth: and to say the truth, Sir, I cannot for the life of me comprehend how such an omission could take place, after the promises and assurances I myself have been a witness to. May I ask you to explain this, and how it came to pass that either he forfeited her favour, or that

that she forgot to make good her promise?" To this Mr. G—— replied, that he could only answer that enquiry in part, by assuring him that the young gentleman in question, had in no degree forfeited the favour and good opinion of the lady deceased.—“Then I am more than ever puzzled to find a cause of her neglect of him,” said the Baronet: “Permit me to ask you if he saw my niece before her death:—“He was with her Ladyship, as I believe, to the very hour of her death.”—“And was he privy to the will,” demanded Sir Roger? “I doubt,” said the worthy respondent, if I ought in strictness to answer that question, but in confidence I will venture to disclose to you and this lady present, that he was not only perfectly made acquainted with the disposition of Lady Crowbery’s property, but also a very active party in the promotion of that measure,” “Then upon my life,” exclaimed Sir Roger, “that same mysterious unknown is without exception the most extraordinary and unaccountable young man now living: this, is the second time he has put fortune from him, and voluntarily preferred poverty to affluence.”—“I protest I do not see any mystery in that,” said; the other, “I clearly understand there are certain sensations he prefers to others, and certain things in this world which he loves better than his interest.”

At this moment Mr. G——, in taking his snuff box from his pocket, dropped his glove upon the floor without perceiving it, which the lovely Isabella immediately picked up and presented to him with a grace peculiar to herself. An attention so flattering, naturally drew a return of excuses and apologies from Mr. G—— for his inattention in suffering her to condescend to such an office; to which she replied, whilst blushes overspread her cheeks,

cheeks, and gratitude glistened in her eyes;—
“Any thing I can do to shew my respect for Mr. G——, will be an office I shall be proud of.” This was pointed in so marked a manner, and introduced with a look so expressive, that it would have been impossible for any common observer, much less for that intelligent person himself, not to comprehend the motive of it; and though Sir Roger gave no sign of his having regarded it otherwise than as an ordinary act of politeness, yet we may risque a conjecture, that he argued from it in his own thoughts pretty much in the same way with the gentleman to whom it was addressed.

This little incident did not, however, altogether turn their discourse from the topic they were upon: Isabella ventured to enquire of Mr. G—— if Henry was recovered from his wound, which question, he conceiving it to allude to the action on board the frigate, drew him into a description of that fight, as he had heard it from Mr. Delapoe. This was in itself an interesting narrative, though not altogether new to the hearers of it, for Cary had written to his uncle since he came into port, and done justice to his brave volunteer; but the warmth of his heart, who had it now in narration, and the affection he had conceived for our amiable hero through the natural sympathy of congenial souls, gave a brighter hue to the description, and animated one at least of his audience in so peculiar a manner, that, at the conclusion of it, she was impelled to venture upon an inference, which in a more collected moment she would hardly have risked, viz. “That where so much courage and benevolence were united, it was no wonder if every action of such a character, produced something uncommonly noble and superior to views of worldly minds.”

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An apostrophe, so much above the pitch of Isabella's natural diffidence, would hardly have passed without a comment from Sir Roger, had not Mr. G—— been present, or, let us rather say, had it not been justly due to the merits of our hero.

C H A P T E R. XI.

A Gleam of Hope suddenly reversed.

“**W**HAT imprudence have I given way to,” said Isabella within herself, when she retired to her solitary meditations in her own apartment, “I shall certainly receive the rebuke which I have merited from my father: but Oh! that I might be suffered to give vent to my respect and gratitude for that charming man who spoke so warmly of my Henry; yes, yes, he is all that’s good and generous, all that is brave and benevolent, all that is engaging, amiable, and excellent in human nature: and now I can interpret his proceeding, I can solve his motives for the sacrifice he has made of his inheritance, to preserve the memory of his mother from disgrace and shame: glorious, unequalled generosity, which throws him on my honour for restitution; and, thank Heaven, that honour glows within my breast as warmly as within his own. Let the consequences be whatever they may, I swear to truth, I will not be a day in possession of the power to do him justice, without seizing the opportunity of performing it: but is that enough? Is there not another hope at his heart? Is there not another wish in mine? May I not believe he loves me? Have I not heard him tenderly express his feelings, his affections, and what an-

swer did I make? Oh! such an one it was as opened my whole soul, without the feeble, the fallacious aid of words. My sighs were vows, my parting tears were seals of love, more sacred more sincere, than all the bonds that law or language can devise; and I will keep them faithfully in remembrance; yes, Henry, whilst I have life my heart can never change; I may be wretched, false I will not be."

Here Sir Roger entered the room; his plea was to enquire if she was preparing for her journey on the next morning: but he sat down, and entered into a discourse that certainly was not calculated to forward those preparations: he began by observing to her how much he had been surpris'd at the reading of his niece's will; and asked her, with a smile, how she felt herself affected by the sudden accession of so great a fortune, "I fancy," said he, "you did not expect, when we propos'd this mournful journey, that you was going to take possession of your own estate; I can assure you, Isabella, it is a very fine place, and, I am told, has been well kept up, tho' our poor friend never visit'd it: I hope however it will not put you out of conceit with Manstock House."—"So long as you inhabit it," she replied, "no place can rival Manstock in my thoughts."—"But when you marry you may entertain other thoughts."—"I will never marry any man capable of an attempt to detach me from a preference so natural, so unalterable."—"Then you must not marry any man," said Sir Roger, who has a predilection for his own family seat." Having already one more than I want," replied Isabella, smiling, "I hope you think there is no occasion for me to add to it."—"I understand you," said the father, in a tone of good humour, "the man to your mind must have no encumbrances of house

house or home: he must be without fortune." "I confess," answering quickly, said Isabella, "I could readily wave that, if he had virtue, courage, generosity, good sense, and discernment to respect and honour you; without these qualities I should despise him, had he the wealth of worlds."—"But you know no such person, not you," said the Baronet, looking archly at her as he spoke, "you have never met with any lover of this description, and whilst you persist in so many unreasonable demands upon his character, probably you never will."—"Not above once in my life, I dare say," answered Isabella.—"And once is enough," said he, "if you are sure of your man: look ye, daughter, I love fair dealing and confession, I fancy our friend G—— and you are pretty much of the same opinion in this case, for I observe you seconded his encomiums on a certain person with uncommon ardour; now I conceive, when a young lady is so warm in the praises of a young man, and both parties are unmarried, it is a strong presumption that there is a liking in the case; if so, why not confess it? Seeing I have no other power over your mind, except by correcting your judgment where I think it errs, or confirming your choice where I think it is well placed."

"Oh! my dear, dear Sir," replied the grateful damsel, "I should be indeed unworthy of so much goodness, if I did not meet your candour with the sincerest exposition of my heart and its affections. yes, my ever-honoured father, I will confess to you, and I trust I need not blush at the confession, that I contemplate Henry's character with admiration and delight: I do believe it is a combination of all human virtues; and I ground my faith, not upon presumptive partial conjecture, but upon proofs which will bear the strictest examination, which

which cannot be controverted by malice itself, and to most of which you yourself can witness. Let his conduct be scrutinized from the first moment that fortune threw him upon our mercy to the present instant; where can be found an example of such patience, resignation, fortitude; of such benevolence, bravery, generosity? What has he not endured, what has he not forgiven? Who ever made such disinterested sacrifices to a principle of justice and honour, in the most refined, the most exalted sense of those virtues? Neither is he less to be admired for the purity of his morals than for the delicacy of his principles."—"Well, well," cried the Baronet, "so far, so good; you have gone on briskly with his mental qualities, and I don't know that you have said a word too much; but what is it all, if that one thing should be wanting, without which no young lady ever yielded more than her approbation to the best of men? If the person in which all these virtues center is not agreeable to you, if the form is not elegant, the manners not engaging, the address not captivating, why then, you know, there can be no love in the heart, and praise is all that poor Henry is ever to expect from your lips."—"Ah! my beloved Sir," cried Isabella, blushing, yet with eyes that shewed it was the blush of joy, "now you are rallying me because I have forborne to speak of what I dare say you suspect was foremost in my thoughts; but in points of truth and facts there can be but one opinion, in matters of taste there may be many: it appears to me that nature has been as partial to Henry in person as in mind; you may not see him with the same eyes."—"Not exactly, perhaps," he replied, smiling, "but yet I can see enough to comprehend why Fanny Claypole fell in love with him, why Susan May was distracted for him, and

and why you my dear Isabella, do not absolutely dislike him.”—“Dislike him,” echoed the fond damsel, “Oh Heavens! I should be a wretch insensible to the finest work of the Creator, if I could dislike him; surely, Sir, nothing in the human form can be more perfect than Henry.”—“Come, come!” resumed Sir Roger, “you have made up for all deficiencies at last; more need not be attempted, for more, I think cannot be said; and now, Isabella, having heard your confession, it is my turn to call upon your attention whilst I make mine. In every thing you have said of Henry I perfectly concur; greater proof I cannot give you of my very high opinion of his merit and accomplishments, than by assuring you, that the reasons I have hitherto had for opposing your attachment to him, are, by recent circumstances in a great degree removed, and as want of fortune alone would in no instance have been my absolute objection, I shall the less insist upon it in the present case, forasmuch as your means are now so great as to make any further augmentation of them by marriage an object not worth attending to. In the place therefore of several impediments, I now see but one remaining, and that is my ignorance of his birth and condition; I cannot dispense with obscurity or meanness. Now altho’ the mystery is not cleared up by the melancholy event of your cousin’s decease, yet the terror of it is removed from my mind by the circumstances of her will; for I shall now disclose to you what I should never have mentioned whilst Lady Crowbery was living, that there was something in her deportment towards your friend Henry that gave me great uneasiness and alarm: not that I entertained suspicions of the sort which her imperious husband had, or affected to have, of their connection; no, that was not the nature of my terror; the thought

thought was out of the reach of probability; the character of the lady gave no countenance to it; on the contrary, there was such an air of maternal tenderness in her regards, that I protest to you, Isabella, I found myself haunted by an idea, that the idle rumour which was spread about the neighbourhood after my niece had eloped with Mr. Delapoer might have been true, and that this same youth had been the unlawful issue of that connection: under the impression of such an idea, you cannot wonder at the vehemence with which I interdicted your correspondence with him; but now that I see him totally overlooked in her will, I can no longer entertain any suspicion of his standing in so near a relation to her, and with that suspicion of his being her son, I now dismiss my opposition to his pretensions as your admirer."

Had Sir Roger Manstock waited for an answer to this speech, it would have been impossible for Isabella to have disguised the sensations it produced, sensations as opposite to those it was meant to convey as chilling disappointment is to thankful joy! But he was gone as soon as he had uttered the concluding words, and gone in the persuasion that he had made a being happy, who was infinitely dear to him, whilst she was left to reflect upon a situation now rendered far more hopeless and distressing than it had been in the worst of moments, when his opposition was more open and declared. Whilst she pondered upon this, her bosom heaved with sighs, and her eyes streamed with tears. All those fascinating ideas which her fond father's encouraging discourse had raised in her mind were at once dispersed, and succeeded by a press of thoughts that presented nothing but despair and disappointment to her imagination. What to do she knew not, and how to shape her conduct in a dilemma
so

so full of difficulties, she was incapable of deciding; for if she availed herself of her father's permission for re-admitting him into the family, what consequence could ensue from such a fruitless indulgence but an aggravation of regret, which every hour of increasing love and approbation would accumulate upon her? On the other hand, what would her father think, after the confession she had made, if she was now to hold back, when she had his leave to advance? What, but that she was the most obstinate and capricious coquette in nature, who was no longer pleased than whilst she was opposed, and had no wishes of her own when they were found to coincide with his? It was now, for the first time, she lamented the confidence that had been reposed in her by her deceased friend and benefactress; for being entrusted with the secret, she could in no case violate her honour by betraying it; and being now made acquainted with her father's motives for proscribing Henry whilst he suspected him to be the son of his niece, no temptation upon earth could overcome her abhorrence of duplicity or deceit, whilst he should retain a sentiment so adverse to that connection; and in this she foresaw no probability of change.

With heavy heart, therefore, we must leave the unhappy Isabella to struggle with these conflicting thoughts, and turn to other scenes, that are prepared to open the succeeding book.

END OF THE NINTH BOOK.

BOOK THE TENTH.

CHAPTER I.

In which the Author confutes himself.

HAVING been so long employed in finding words, according to rule and method, for others, I begin to think I have a right to bestow some according to my own fancy, and that just now prompts me to write without any rule or method whatsoever.

In the first place then, permit me to say, that I do not allow any man can have a fair excuse for not reading these volumes once at least in his life, provided he can read at all. For what is the plea, I would fain know, that he can set up for refusing them a perusal? Is he too wise to be taught any thing new?—they do not pretend to have any new thing in them or about them; they boast themselves to be as old as nature; and as for instruction, if he is too wise to want it, they are not so foolish as to force it upon him against his wishes.

Is he too lazy to be amused by any reading? then let him employ a toad-eater to recite them in his ears till he falls asleep; he cannot purchase a cheaper or more harmless narcotic in his apothecary's shop.

Is he too proud to stoop his genius to the perusal of a trivial novel? my life upon it, his genius is oftentimes more trivially employed. Is truth his constant study and pursuit? and has he not yet found out that there is truth in fiction; that by the device of fable (as the philosopher Saint
Pierre

Pierre well observes) the soul gradually opens itself to truth? I am yain enough to think there may be many more truths in this poor fable, than he will discover or comprehend in all his metaphysics.

But some may plead business, and business must be followed.—True! and so must hounds; but the man who follows either, be it ever so closely, will still find that he has gone many miles out of his way. Let the man of business recollect how much of his life is spent in being busy about nothing, and he cannot but acknowledge he has had time to bestow upon the reading of these little books, and a hundred others. But all this while he has been accumulating money: if he dies to-morrow he will die worth one hundred thousand pounds; and if he does, *is he any whit wiser*, (I put the question in the words of the inimitable author of *The Serious Call*) *is he any whit wiser*, I demand, *than he who has taken the same pains to have a hundred thousand pair of boots and spurs when he leaves the world?*

But harkye, Mr. Novelist, the fastidious philosopher will say, my studies do not lie your way. To him I could answer—then are my studies, learned Sir, more complaisant than your's; for as far as you yourself participate of human nature, so far you come within the scope of my researches; why then may not you deign to read me, though I do not aspire to copy you? Though your proud castle is barred against my approach, my humble cottage is the seat of general hospitality, and open to you in common with the rest of my fellow creatures. The simple goose-quill, that can fan one spark of pure benevolence into activity by the playfulness of its motion, has done more for mankind than the full-plumed philosopher, who, with

with the strut of the goose itself, cackles out his despicable spleen, and hisses at each passenger as he goes regardless by him.

If but one of all my readers has felt the sympathy of a generous sentiment, if another has experienced the conscious sense of self-reproaching turpitude, and blushed at the discovery, I think I have thrown more light into the world, than the philosopher can dig out of the bowels of the earth, though he may thereby affect to decide upon the world's age, as jockies do upon horses by looking in their mouths. What if philosophers have now found out that water is no element? they have neither added to its uses, nor taken any away; and as for me, though, for peace sake, I will forbear to say it is an element, I will not promise them to rest my faith so far upon their dogma, as to say, that it is not. The Author of Nature seems graciously to have ordained, that in searching after things without use, our enquiries should be pursued without success, so that no labour might be wasted upon things that cannot profit us: but it is only after these curious nothings that our philosopher is ever on the quest; and yet he pretends to say, that he has no leisure to bestow upon my men and women. Why will he not rather study to be informed of what would profit him to know, and submit to be ignorant of what the Great Disposer of the Universe hath, in tender consideration of his short-lived creatures, buried out of sight? As much truth as man's intellects can admit, is accessible to man's enquiries, but, ignorance is given to the soul, as the lid is bestowed upon the eye; it lets in all the light it can usefully dispense with, and shuts out what it cannot bear. And now, no more of the philosopher; whilst I am contemplating the statue, let him hunt after the beetle that crawls at the base of it.

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There is, notwithstanding, more for me to do; and as these volumes are my clients, so am I their advocate, and must be prepared for all that may oppose me: the next, however, is a gentle caviller, and approaches in a form that challenges my respect; it is a reader I would not offend and shock for all that fame could give me; she comes with modest blushes on her cheeks, and points to certain pages doubled down in my offending work, too highly coloured for her chaste revolting eye to rest upon. What shall I reply to this appellant? How defend myself from one, who comes into the lists with all the virtues armed in her support? Where now is my impure Jemima? where is Fanny Claypole? where even my benevolent Susan May?—Fled out of sight, abashed and self-condemned! What avails it me to say that they are Nature's children? My reproving critic does not wish to make acquaintance with the profligates of her family. In vain I urge, that contrast is the soul of composition; that joy and sorrow, health and sickness, good and evil, chequer life itself through every stage; that even virtue wants an opposite to give its lustre full display: she does not think that scenes, which address themselves to the passions, can be defended by arguments that apply to the judgment: I may be justified by the rules of composition; she is trying me by those of decorum. If I shelter myself in the plea, that temptations are the test of an heroic spirit; that I cannot *make bricks without straw*; and that although the said straw be of an inflammable quality, yet I must work with such materials as I have: she will not hesitate to admit the necessity of temptations, but she will resolutely condemn the too profuse and prominent display of them; she would work her shades more tender; mine are too bold: if I say,
wait

wait for the moral, she replies, that it is the nature of susceptibility not to wait; the mischief is in the front, the moral is in the rear; the remedy cannot always overtake the disease; and she asks, where is the wit in voluntarily provoking the fang of the viper, because, forsooth, we have a medicine in our closet that will staunch the poison, if we do not slip the time of applying it?

Mark now, candid reader, if I have not wove a hedge about myself, which I have neither cunning to creep through, not agility to climb; but it is ever thus when I argue with the ladies. If their modesty is of so touchy a temper, as to accuse me of impudence, I know no better way to convince them of their mistake, than by copying that modesty, and making no defence; and sure I am, that such would be their conduct in the case of real attack, when the relation of it only stirs them into such tremors and palpitations: I fear, therefore, that their extreme susceptibility proves too much; those must ride their palfreys with a very loose rein, who are so soon thrown out of their seat upon every little start or stumble that they make.

What I have written, I have written in the hope of recommending virtue by the fiction of a virtuous character, which, to render amiable, I made natural, and to render natural, I made subject to temptations, though resolute in withstanding them: in one instance only my hero owes his victory to chance, and not to his own fortitude: if virtue therefore cannot read her own encomium, without catching fire at the allurements of her antagonist, she is not that pure and perfect virtue I was studious to pay court to, but some hypocrite, who has basely tricked herself out in the uniform of the corps, for the opportunity of deserting over to the enemy with her arms and accoutrements.

C H A P.

CHAPTER. II.

A Peep behind the Curtain at Crowbery Castle..

WHILST the gentle bosom of Isabella was rent with a thousand perplexing inquietudes, the proud exulting heart of Fanny Claypole was anticipating the fancied joys of rank and splendour, and already practising the stately airs of a Viscountess elect. Her uncle now began to pass his time not quite so much to his satisfaction as he had done: though his niece still continued to treat him with external civility, yet there was a gracious manner in it, that conveyed the idea of condescension and protection, rather than of cordiality or respect. The restraint which she and her noble paramour submitted to in his company, though as little as decency could dispense with, was still something more than they could willingly spare on certain occasions, and he then began to discover, that all his accommodating complacency did not quite answer their purposes, and that his absence began to be wished for by both parties. This indeed was more than insinuated to him by dumb shew; for my Lord took frequent occasions of enquiring, whether Sir Roger Manstock would not be uneasy at his parish being left without a resident minister, and once or twice asked him, in a natural manner, if he was doing any thing at the parsonage, and whether it would require any repairs before it was made fit for his reception, intimating, with much seeming kindness, that if there was any thing wanting for his comfort, he would send his own workmen over, and fit it to his wishes; adding, that it would ever give him the

the most supreme delight to shew any mark of his respect to the uncle of his amiable friend Miss Claypole. These hints that sagacious gentleman was not slow to comprehend; but it did not just now suit him to put them into practice.

When lawyer Ferret returned from Manstock, and the copy of Lady Crowbery's will, which he had there taken, had been perused by his Lordship, that noble personage, in a manner suitable to his high dignity, expressed a most sovereign contempt for the good things of this world, which it had conveyed in such ample proportion to the fair Isabella, and so sparingly to himself; in fact, it is reasonable to suppose, that as his Lordship's expectations were extremely moderate, his disappointment could not be very great, so that he bore the event without any great exercise of his virtues; one thing, however, he remarked with a considerable degree of satisfaction, and this was, the unexpected omission of any legacy to our hero Henry: this circumstance he communicated, without loss of time, to Mr. Claypole and Miss Fanny, commenting upon it in a style that sufficiently disclosed to them the gratification he secretly derived to himself in talking of it.—“You see,” cried his Lordship, in his usual style of pleasantry, “what sort of stuff her ladyship's liking to that young fellow was made of! no longer pipe, no longer pay, was her maxim. He must now sink into his primitive obscurity; all his golden hopes are blasted, and, I dare engage, he is at this moment, venting execrations against her deceit and his own credulity. But he is rightly serv'd; may such ever be the fate of all upstart favourites of married ladies!”—Here Claypole chimed in, with an inference or two in the way of retort upon Henry for his refusal of Blachford's bequest, observing, that the man, who,

who, from an affectation of disinterestedness, withstood the favours of fortune when they were tendered to him, generally lived long enough to find himself the dupe of his own vanity, and to bewail his folly in the bitterness of self-reproach and vexation. "I see but one chance that remains for this silly fellow," added he, "which is, to betake himself with all humility to Blachford's leavings, and pay his court, without loss of time, to Mrs. Susan May of meretricious memory, by whose favour he may still subsist upon the bread of infamy, and sing psalms with Ezekiel Daw to some godly tune, whilst the old dame scums the pot. So ends the history of Henry the Foundling, whose adventures, with the help of a little modern garnish, may furnish matter to some paltry novelist for a scurvy tale, to fill a gap in the shelves of a circulating library; and, if the writer has the wit to make the most of it, he may find out a moral in the catastrophe of his hero, and entitle it, *The Rise and Fall of Vanity*; for such in fact it is."

Miss Fanny threw a different light upon the subject; she confessed he well deserved the disappointment he had met with; but she did not think that was excuse sufficient for the person who disappointed him. "I own," said that candid young lady, "I have always accustom'd myself to consider a promise as a sacred thing: where I give hopes I think myself in conscience bound to make them good; and on the other hand, where they are given to me, I should hold the person base in the extreme, abandon'd to all sense of honour, and a wretch, whom, without a crime, we might treat as an outlaw and assassin, who violated the faith he had pledg'd, and the word of promise he had given. Now I do not mean to impute this baseness to any person in particular, much less to
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the respectable object of our present conversation; between man and woman, where favours have been interchang'd, and promises grafted upon those pledges of affection, they are binding in the most sacred sense, and he or she, who breaks from them abandon'd in the extremest degree."

"Certainly," interposed my Lord, "without all doubt you speak what every person of honour must admit to be true, and what I, permit me to say, feel, and, I hope, practise, in its strictest sense. Put the case, by way of elucidation only, that I profess myself the admirer of a lady of reputation; I am smitten with her charms; in short I am in love with her. Very well. Believing me to be a man of honour, she allows me to make suit to her; I gain her confidence, we'll suppose, and she begins to favour my suit; she smiles on my humble addresses."—Here a soft glance from the bright eyes of Miss Fanny brought his Lordship's eloquence to a pause. He gently took her hand, and in a whisper tenderly murmured—"Lovely creature, if you look upon me with those eyes, I shall forget every word I was saying, every sense will be lost in ecstasy and rapture."—"Go on, go on," said Fanny, smiling, "I am much interested in what you are saying, and shou'd be sorry to interrupt you in the most important part of it."—"Put me in then," said the peer, "for I protest to you I am lost."—"Why, you had just gain'd the lady's affections," replied Fanny; "nay, I believe o'my conscience you was going on too prosperously for her repose, unless you was upon the strictest honour."—"There you are rather beforehand with me," resumed my Lord, "tho', I confess I was coming to the point: be it so then! Let us a moment suppose that this lady, in pity to my sufferings, or, if you will, in kind compliance

pliance with my importunate and empassion'd solicitations, generously concedest those favours, which are the greatest woman can bestow or man receive; can it for a moment be doubted that I am bound by all the ties of honour, gratitude and justice, to indemnify the reputation of my benefactress? Heavens! I were the vilest wretch that ever breath'd, cou'd I do less than tender her my heart, my hand, my name, rank, fortune, every thing that I possess on earth, as soon as ever opportunity and circumstances wou'd permit. These are my principles, my dear Miss Claypole, and they are such as, I trust, your worthy uncle, if he has listen'd to our discourse, will give me credit for, and approve."

"Certainly, my Lord," replied that reverend personage; "there cannot be two opinions on the subject; were the case to happen as you put it, every man of honour's conduct must be such as you stare it; but I must take the liberty to observe, that no woman of honour, who was wise, wou'd put him to the trial."

"Ah! my good Sir," said my Lord, "you speak exactly within the line of your profession, and so far you speak right. 'Tis as natural for you, who are a parson, to preach up self-denial, as it is for an apothecary to recommend physic, tho' nature, in both cases, nauseates the dose, and the finest gratification of the senses is sacrific'd by the prescription. That rigid morality, that wou'd strip life of all its best enjoyments, wou'd also divest our hearts of all their most exalted sensations. What wou'd become of those glowing effusions of love and gratitude, if there was no trust, no confidence, no mutual interchange of honour and good faith? The lawyer, who furnishes my occasions with a loan, and binds me down by the fetters of a mortgage, is a trader in money who confers no favour on me by the accommodation

I derive from it; whereas the friend, who confidentially supplies my wants, and rests upon my promise for indemnification, leaves me under an obligation, that convinces me I was in his esteem, and fixes him in mine. Favours in love are like favours in friendship; the same rule applies to both; to trust is the test of friendship, to be trusted is the triumph of love."

"I believe, my Lord," said Miss Claypole, "we are talking upon a subject, that my uncle has not made his study, therefore we may as well drop it for the present."

This being said, a sullen silence ensued; the advocates for the tender passion no longer deigned to maintain an argument with so unequal an opponent, but contented themselves with giving him to understand, by certain plain-speaking looks, that if he had any private studies to pursue, which might occupy an hour or two of his time, they had resources within themselves for filling up the interval. The intelligent observer read their meaning in their looks, and placidly withdrew.

Doubtful as I am, whether some of my readers might not think that there was one dialogue too many in my history, were I to record what now ensued between Miss Fanny and the Viscount, I shall omit the recital, and conclude this chapter.

CHAPTER III.

An Excursion from Crewdery Castle.

THE next morning both Phœbus and Sir Roger Manstock had harnessed their steeds, and advanced

advanced upon their journey before the beauteous Miss Fanny broke the soft bands of sleep asunder, and arose to renew her charms at the toilette. Her protracted slumbers had so far exceeded the accustomed hour of breakfast, that she gave orders to her attendant to serve her in her own apartment: polite enquiries were sent up more than once by his Lordship, to which excuses were returned of slight indisposition; in the mean time the following reflections arose in that gentle fair one's mind, upon a review of past occurrences.

Well, to be sure, there is something very captivating in a title, else this same Lord Crowbery wou'd be insupportable; I perceive I shall be most heartily sick of him before the honey-moon is half out; I shall never have the patience of his former lady; let him beware how he treats me in the manner he behav'd to her; I'll soon shew him that my spirit is at least as good as his own; he shan't shut me up in this dismal castle, and nauseate me with his surfeiting fondness: sure, of all visitations under heaven, that of a stale doating husband wou'd be the most intolerable. Oh! Henry! Henry! why wou'd you reject me? Still, still your image haunts me; my fond heart still doats upon you, and wou'd spurn this odious creature and his titles with disdain, cou'd I but gain your love. But hold! perhaps your disappointment may have humbled you; all hopes now blasted, and Isabella thrown by fortune beyond the reach even of your meditations, who can tell but you are now regretting your own obstinacy, and wishing to recal that fatal hour, when mad with love, and fir'd with resentment—Oh! horrible! I cannot name the rest."—Here she threw herself back in her chair, and, bursting into tears, fortunately found vent for a gust of passion, that

would else have thrown her into violent hysterics. Again she resumed her soliloquy—"What did my provoking uncle mean by saying you must marry Susan May? No; that my Henry will never do. His spirit never will stoop to that; it never shall, if I have influence to prevent it. I'll sacrifice ambition, fortune, every thing to love. I have befooled myself enough, too much, with this detested lord; I sickened at his name; I'll cast him off for ever.—Stop! where is my fancy carrying me? There are some charms in title, rank and splendour; they gratify ambition, and do not exclude love. I have gone much too far now to recede; I were a fool indeed to pay the purchase, and not reap the profit: I have him sure, and I'll not let him loose. Viscountess Crowbery will pique the pride of plain Miss Manstock. Oh! 'twill be bitterness and gall to that old Baronet to see his niece's coronet upon my head; delicious triumph! glorious revenge!"

Thus whilst her mind was fluctuating betwixt contending passions, my Lord announced himself with a gentle tap at the door, and humbly asked admittance. It was granted, and as he approached her, he said—"I venture to assume the privileges of a husband, and come to ask, if you have any orders for the carriages or servants this morning, as I think the day is fine, and promises you a pleasant airing. Henceforward, Madam, you command in this house, and the humblest of your servants is now in your presence." This was an address, that merited what it received, a gracious smile, and threw a turning weight into the scale of the addresser and his peerage, that made poverty and Henry kick the beam. This fair beginning was still further advanced by a very seasonable auxiliary, in the shape of a handsome brilliant

ant, set in a ring, which his Lordship with great gallantry put upon her wedding finger. The heart of Fanny Claypole was amenable to so many passions, besides that of love in its common acceptation, that the donor of the ring could not fail to be delighted with the impression it had made; and as that young lady was a better actress than Lord Crowbery was a critic, it is not much to be wondered at, if, upon this occasion, he mistook artifice for sincerity.

After a few indispensable arrangements at the toilette, which my Lord was graciously permitted to be a spectator of, and which were not ill calculated to display her charms in the most alluring attitudes, Fanny signified her intention of taking the air in a little cabriolet, drawn by one horse of gentle condition, having been long in the habit of obeying the hand of a less daring driver, and order was given accordingly. Fanny had a scheme in meditation, of paying a visit to Susan May in the course of her circuit, and for that reason chose it should be solitary; she therefore set out, followed by a servant, leaving my Lord at home to meditate on his felicity, or discuss new topics of edification with his reverend guest, as they strolled through the plantations and gardens.

Miss Claypole, after a tour about the park, came upon the village green, and stopt at the gate of Susan's mansion, who soon presented herself, and very respectfully invited her into the house. This was graciously accepted by the Viscountess elect, and after a few common questions had passed and repassed, they fell upon the subject of Lady Crowbery's death, and then Miss Fanny demanded of Susan, if she had been informed of the circumstances of her will: upon her answering in the negative, she related to her the leading, particular

particulars, and observed, with much assumed concern, that it was a matter most surprising to her, how it came to pass Henry should be so totally forgotten, that even his name was not once mentioned, nor any thing that could allude to a provision for him recommended to the heiress, even by the most distant hint.

Susan gazed with astonishment upon her, as if in doubt whether she was to yield credit to the account she was giving of an event so unexpected. "If it is so," she said, "and if my young lady is in possession of the estate, and has it at her own disposal, I can only presume to say she has a noble opportunity of being generous to the most deserving man upon earth; and I can't doubt but she will avail herself of it."—"I think of him as you do," replied Miss Fanny; "but our sentiments my good friend may not be every body's sentiments; they may not be Miss Manstock's; and they certainly are not likely to be Sir Roger's. Refunding is a pitch of generous self-denial, that is hardly to be found in any other breast, than one of such superior magnanimity as your liberal friend's: if you had such a fortune dropt into your lap, I can readily believe that you would be generous enough to invite Henry to a share of it; nay, I can tell you, Mrs. Susan, there are some friends of your's, not far from hence, who credit you for that generosity, even upon your present establishment.

"They may safely credit me," replied Susan, "so far as to suppose I never can forget to whom I am indebted for every thing I possess; I hope therefore, I am capable of the gratitude they ascribe to me, though not so presumptuous as to annex to it the conditions which they seem to allude to. No, Madam, be assur'd I know him and myself too well, not to know that poverty can never so depress
him

him as to level him with me ; the woman Mr. Henry marries must not only be pure from guilt of her own contracting, but even from involuntary stains, which you well know I am not. I believe Madam, even levity of behaviour, and a forward carriage in the person he might else have admir'd, wou'd change his liking into disgust, tho' she had every other charm that cou'd attract him."

Here it is supposed that Miss Fanny would have blushed, if art had not been beforehand with nature, and dipt her pencil in the counterfeited tint of modesty and shame. But though nature was barred from one avenue, she found vent at another ; and whilst conscious recollection smote her heart, her tongue betrayed how justly she applied the observation to herself. "I can readily understand," she said, "where your remark points, and what person I am to thank as the founder of it ; for servants are very apt to retail the scandal that their mistresses propagate. I know there have been very impertinent stories circulated about me ; but I wou'd have you, and every one else concern'd with you, to be assured, that my reputation is not to be slander'd with impunity : I have friends, Mrs. Susan, that will make those tremble who attempt it ; and, I believe, you will soon be convinc'd, that if it is your wish to live here, and enjoy your newly acquir'd fortune in peace and quiet, you will be extremely cautious how you suffer any expressions to escape you, that can be construed to impute the smallest indiscretion to my conduct."

With these words, the lady elect made her exit with all due dignity, and without vouchsafing a word more, or even a look to Susan, who attended her to the step of her cabriole, where she replaced herself in her seat, and pursued her way towards the castle.

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At that instant Ezekiel Daw came forth from his cottage, and turning into the house with Susan began a conversation, which we shall reserve for the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

There are more Ways than one of interpreting a doubtful Text.

“SO, daughter Susan! I perceive you have had a visit from that young madam of the castle. You did right to receive her with respect, for that is due to our superiors in condition; but if she came with the purpose of enticing you into conversation about our absent friend Henry, it is to be hoped you had discretion to keep a watch upon the door of your lips, and not to satisfy an importunate curiosity. I have here a letter from our friend Henry, which announces the death of our respected Lady Crowbery. It is dated from Falmouth, which I understand to be the port from whence she was to have embarked for Lisbon. It pleased the Supreme Disposer of all events to call her to himself from this world of sorrow by a swift messenger. Be it so! we must all obey the summons, some sooner, some later: it is in vain to lament. She was a pious and a charitable lady, and the poor have lost a friend, which, I fear, will not be replaced to them by that young madam at least, who, as common fame reports, is destined to be her successor at the castle. As the Lady Crowbery died in possession of a very ample patrimony in her own right, we may now expect to hear that our beloved Henry is rewarded for his disinterestedness,

edness, and made independent for his life: of this I am sure, that the deceased lady was much too just to disappoint the hopes she had inspired him with, and far too discerning to overlook his merits, and therefore, child, take notice, I predict a very ample provision for our absent friend."

"That is a very natural prediction for you to make," cried Susan, "I wish I could say it was a true one; but alas, alas, my good Mr. Daw, our poor friend has got nothing; Miss Claypole just now informs me, that he is not so much as named in Lady Crowbery's will."—"It is a lie," cried Ezekiel, starting from his seat, "it is a false aspersion; Miss Claypole is a slut and a hussy for her pains; a defamer of the dead, and that's a foul and heinous misdemeanour. I pronounce it impossible for the Lady Crowbery to be a deceiver, a dealer in false promises, and a hypocrite at the hour of death, and therefore I reject your information, and abide by my prediction. What, child, will you tell me that I don't know what is in human nature, that I should be made the bubble and the dupe of such a prating minx as that Miss Claypole, who never yet uttered one truth of Henry since she knew him? Don't we know enough of her dark dealings, not to take her word in any case where he is concerned? Did not I tell you that she came for no good purpose? and now you see I did not speak lightly and without good reason; learn from this child, I exhort you, not to trust too confidentially to your own rash opinions, but listen to those who have more knowledge and experience than yourself."

Whilst Ezekiel was uttering these words in an elevated voice and upright attitude, a letter was delivered to Susan, which one of Sir Roger's servants had brought over from Manstock. It was

from the fair hand of Isabella, and written on that very morning early before she set out upon her journey. Susan cast her eye over it, and then read aloud to Ezekiel as follows:—

“ Dear Susan,

“ I cannot leave the country without giving you
 “ a few lines on the subject of a melancholy event,
 “ of which, as far as your friend and benefactor is
 “ interested, I am persuaded you will be anxious
 “ to be informed.”—“ Right!” cried Ezekiel,
 “ now you will find my prediction verified.”—
 “ The sad news of my poor cousin’s death will
 “ probably have reached you before this comes to
 “ hand, and if so, you will be told at the same
 “ time, that he is in no respect benefited by Lady
 “ Crowbery in her will.”—“ There, There!”
 repeated the exulting prophet, “ you perceive
 the falsehood had got wind.” Susan made no answer, but resumed her reading.—“ It is true,”—
 “ It is false,” cried Ezekiel, “ I won’t believe it.”
 Susan repeated—“ It is true that his name is not
 “ to be found in the will; but lest you should be
 “ tempted in your zeal for his interest to make
 “ false conclusions, that would be injurious to the
 “ memory of the excellent lady, I recommend
 “ to you to wait the event, in the full persuasion,
 “ that neither she will be found regardless of her
 “ promises, nor your most amiable friend unwor-
 “ thy of her affection.

No sooner had Susan read these concluding words, than Ezekiel, in an ecstasy of joy, struck the staff in his hand with vehemence on the floor, crying out—“ I told thee so, I told thee so: now wilt thou believe me, silly child, that art drawn away with every breath and vapour of false doctrine. Dostn’t hear? dostn’t understand that all is well
 and

and as we wish it, and that your prattling companion, and her politic uncle, will be confuted in their false sayings? Did not I truly pronounce of the Lady Crowbery that she would not be found regardless of her promises; and dost not thou mark those very words repeated, as it were, from my prophetic lips in the young lady's letter? And now, child, why am I right in my judgment, and these wrong in their's? I'll tell thee why, it is because I draw my inferences from a clear and perfect insight into human nature, whilst they form their's upon crude conjecture, upon vain imaginations, with which they deceive themselves. And now I will read thee Henry's own letter; listen."

"Death hath deprived the world of a most excellent being, and me of a friend, whose loss I must ever deplore: Lady Crowbery is dead! Wherever it shall please Lord Crowbery to deposit her remains, I shall take measures so as to be present at her interment, tho' it may be prudent to disguise my person. When that last duty is performed, I propose making you a visit at the cottage. I have much to say to you, and something for the private ear of your fair neighbour, my valued friend Susan."

What were the precise sensations that these last words stirred in the gentle bosom of the attentive hearer, we do not pretend to divine, but something there was either in the sound or in the sense of them that suffused her face with blushes, which Doctor Daw, notwithstanding his prodigious skill and penetration, just then happened to overlook, so that there was time for them to fade away into a deadly pale, which succeeded without attracting the notice of the aforesaid sagacious critic in the human character. How he was employed whilst these changes were in transition, we are not minutely

nutely informed; but surely not in the contemplation of one of the most expressive countenances in nature, else the scenery there displayed could hardly have escaped him, though the secret spring that gave movement to it, might have puzzled him to find out.

Now it had so happened in the reading of Miss Manstock's letter, as it has happened in the cases of many other readings, that her two commentators, Ezekiel Daw and Susan May, had two different methods of interpreting the same text; the preacher making it conform to his own prediction, and Susan construing it according to her own first impression of the fact: whilst the one therefore believed Henry very richly provided for, the other persuaded herself he was not worth a doit. Now the reader perhaps may recollect that Miss Fanny, who communicated the intelligence of his being left out of Lady Crowbery's will, threw out a hint at a report, which saddled him upon Susan for a moiety of her means; and though Susan instantly returned an answer, which, we hope, was proper for the occasion, and well becoming her to make, yet it is not unnatural to suppose that it might raise some ideas in her mind, which she did not hold herself bound to communicate, either to Miss Fanny, or even to Doctor Daw himself. Combining, therefore, these ideas with the concluding paragraph in Henry's letter, that he had *something for her private ear*, we may find a clue to the sensations that occasioned Susan's change of countenance at the hearing of that paragraph. As to the consequences which this abstraction of thought on her part had with respect to Ezekiel, they were only those of affording him free scope for talking upon any subject he thought fit, whilst she meditated upon another, a privilege he frequently enjoyed in the

the company of his friends without finding it out.

CHAPTER V.

Our History shifts the Scene.

WE now turn our attention to the lovely Isabella, who, on the second day from her leaving Manstock, arrived with her father at the ancient seat of the Adamants called Hagley Hall. It was a stately though irregular pile of building, in the Gothic stile but in perfect repair, with a handsome park about it and a fine command of water. Lady Crowbery had always kept up a sufficient establishment of servants, by whose care every thing was in good order to receive their expected visitants, though the melancholy occasion that brought them there, kept the neighbours and tenants, whom curiosity or respect would else have assembled, from intruding on their privacy. One old gentleman, the rector of the parish and well known to Sir Roger, presented himself on their arrival, of which he had been apprised by letter from the Baronet. He had been long the administrator of all affairs at Hagley Hall, and the appearance of the place bore testimony to his care. This worthy person (by name and title Doctor Sandford) was greatly affected at the meeting with Sir Roger and the heiress, whose tears kept pace with his on the occasion: he informed them that a messenger had arrived to apprise him that the body might be expected the next day; whereupon the day following was settled between him and Sir Roger for the ceremony of interment.

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It was about the hour of dinner when Sir Roger arrived at Hagley Hall, and Doctor Sandford had provided for their entertainment. His company was a seasonable relief to the worthy Baronet, who, to his great concern, saw his beloved Isabella much depressed in spirits; and though he did his best to comfort her, yet whilst the painful secret of her lover's birth hung on her mind, it cannot be wondered at if all his kind endeavours failed of their effect.

After dinner, however, she kept her seat at the table with her father and Doctor Sandford, with whose company she was greatly pleased; and in truth he was an amiable and excellent man. In the course of their conversation, they fell upon the subject of Mr. Ratcliffe's death, whose parish adjoined to Hagley, and whose preferment was yet undisposed of. His parsonage house was still unoccupied, but the duty of the church was executed for the time by Doctor Sandford's son, a young man educated at the university of Cambridge, and lately admitted into priest's orders. In speaking of the melancholy event of poor Ratcliffe's sudden death, the good Doctor expatiated on the virtuous and amiable qualities of his late neighbour and friend with great sensibility, bewailing the irreparable loss which his parishioners had suffered, but avoiding with great delicacy the most distant hint of any expectation for his son. The strongest solicitation would probably have been less efficacious than this very delicacy, which did by no means escape the observation of his hearers. Isabella expressed a desire of visiting the deserted mansion of Mr. Ratcliffe before she left the country, the contemplation of it, as the residence of so good a man, would impress her mind with melancholy awe
and

and veneration. Sir Roger combined other impressions in his interpretation of this desire; but Doctor Sandford, who did not dive quite so deep into her motives, proceeded to say, that much as he lamented the loss of his friend Ratcliffe, there was yet another reason with him, that made it a most gloomy spectacle in his sight; "I allude," said he, "to the sudden and unaccountable disappearance of a youth called Henry, who, under very mysterious circumstances, was reared and educated from infancy to manhood by that excellent man." A look of marked attention from Isabella, caused him to apply his discourse more immediately to her, and he proceeded to say—"Ah! Madam, to me, who knew this young man, and regarded him as a creature little short of perfection in mind, person and manners, the loss of him without any tidings of his fate, is one of the heaviest reflections which my heart can muse upon. He was devoted to his patron and preceptor, and at his death seemed to have vanished like a ghost: whither he went, and what may have befallen him, Heaven only knows; but if human virtue merits a peculiar Providence, surely that youth, so lost to us, will be the object of Heaven's care."

"Your prediction is verified," cried Sir Roger, and immediately turning to Isabella, who was pale as ashes, tendered a glass of water, which perhaps was seldom if ever more critically applied.

Dr. Sandford, surprised at this alarm, gazed upon Isabella and her father, like a man who perceives he has done mischief, and neither knows what nor how.—"I hope," he said, "I have given no offence, it is purely unintentional, if I have."—"Not the least," cried Sir Roger, "not

"not the least offence, good sir, but quite the contrary; we think of this young man as highly as you do; we know him well, and we love him much."—"I rejoice to hear, it," cried Sandford, "from my heart, I rejoice to hear that the young man is under your protection: Heaven has indeed been bountiful in granting him so good a friend!"

It was at this very moment that Isabella, though agitated by a variety of thoughts, conceived the resolution of suggesting to her father the nomination of young Sandford to Mr. Ratcliffe's vacancy, and to back it with all her influence. No sooner had she rallied her spirits, than her eyes directed such a glowing beam of gratitude and benevolence towards those of the good old Doctor, that he must have been blind indeed if he had not seen, and dull as death if he had not understood the language of that look. He was neither void of sight or sense, but sufficiently quick in both, to perceive that he had given pleasure by his praise of Henry, to one of the most beautiful and not the least sensitive objects in creation; and he was not slow to conclude, that where so much joy was caused some affection must exist; he therefore ventured to enquire where his favourite was to be found. To this Isabella replied, by giving a short narrative of his story, which left him at Falmouth, beyond which her information did not enable her to proceed,—“Then I'll engage we shall see him here,” said the Doctor, “and I hope, if he comes, he will gratify me so far as to make my house his home, which will be matter of peculiar joy to my poor son, who has beat the whole country round in search of him, till despair has driven him from the attempt.”—"I hope then," cried Isabella, "you will lose no time in giving Mr. Sandford the information so agreeable to him."—

Here

Here she was joined by Sir Roger, who so cordially desired a servant might be instantly sent off to invite him, that the old man, who confessed he was hard by at the parsonage, consented with no small pleasure to the summons: and if that fatherly pleasure needed a justification, the appearance of young Sandford, which a few minutes produced, very effectually afforded it, for he was in person, manners and address, a son to be proud of.

Isabella's warm heart immediately accorded to him; he was the friend of Henry; that was enough: the blaze of beauty, that good humour threw upon her enchanting countenance as she welcomed him with smiles, so dazzled him upon his first introduction to her, that his admiration resembled awkwardness, and he scarce knew how to address himself to her; the charms of her voice, and the encouraging sweetness of her manner, soon put him at his ease, without diminishing his respect. The company now naturally classed themselves according to their ages, and whilst the fathers fell into discourse upon matters of business, the young people entertained each other upon topics more suitable to their taste.

Friendship for Henry on one part, and love on the other, were not long in agreeing upon what that topic should be, and it soon became manifest that the history of our hero's adventures was reciprocally the most interesting subject they could talk upon. Isabella again went over the account, enlarging upon it with many more particulars than she had thought necessary to recite in her first narration; but there was now only one hearer, and to him every circumstance was new; to say that he heard her with delight, is to do justice to but one of his senses, when there was another at least in
full

full occupation, which filled his heart with rapture, and would have made *the dullest tale of sorrow pleasing*.—"What voice do I hear?" said he, within himself; "what vision do I behold? She breathes through rows of pearls over beds of roses. 'Tis an enchantment! she will vanish presently, and I shall start out of my trance."

When Isabella had brought her history to a close, young Sandford remained silent for some time, as if unwilling to take the discourse from one whom he had listened to with such delight; at last, perceiving that she expected a reply, he thanked her for the entertainment she had vouchsafed him, every circumstance of which had been very highly interesting to him, whose mind had been so long kept in anxious suspense about the fate of a friend, who was deservedly so dear to him. "I always lov'd Henry," said he, "from a boy, and though there were some years between us, yet his manly character, his command of temper, and excellent understanding, gave him advantages which my greater maturity of age and experience could not compensate for: on many occasions I have profited by his better judgment, not unfrequently by his friendly reproof, and more than once have been very seriously indebted to his zealous spirit and undaunted gallantry: I hear therefore of his behaviour in the fight at sea with much more pleasure than surprise; for I believe nothing braver lives on earth; but there is withal a tenderness and candour in his nature, that endear him to our hearts, as much as his more brilliant qualities entitle him to our admiration. If ever that day shall come to pass, when the clouds that obscure his birth shall disperse, I am persuaded it will be found that he is of noble descent, and should the same good fortune raise him to affluence and an elevated

elevated situation, I am certain there is no sphere in life so extended which his virtues will not adorn and fill.

CHAPTER. VI.

A short Excursion leads to an important interview.

AT the expected time arrived the body of the deceased Lady Crowbery, properly attended and followed by a numerous company of the tenants and peasants appertaining to the estate. There is no need for us to describe the solemn pageantry of a funeral, it will suffice to say, that the mortal remains of one of the meekest and most benevolent of God's creatures were committed to the vault of her ancestors, with every ceremonious rite that could mark the respect of her surviving friends, and every tribute of unfeigned sorrow that could testify their affection. The service was performed by the reverend Dr. Sandford, assisted by his son, and the body was followed by Sir Roger Manstock and Isabella chief mourners: a great concourse of spectators were assembled, amongst whom two strangers in horsemen's loose coats, were conspicuous for the eagerness with which they pressed forwards at the interment of the body, as well as for the interest they appeared to take in that affecting ceremony: deep affliction seemed to possess them wholly, and as they held their handkerchiefs to their faces all the while the service was performing, none of those whose attention was drawn towards them (and they were
not

not a few) could get a sight of their faces, or learn by any enquiry who they were. After the service was over they separated themselves from the crowd, mounted their horses, and rode off with speed.

There was one however in that mournful assembly, whose attention had not been so totally engrossed by his share in it, as not to catch a sudden glimpse of these strangers, which led him to a pretty confident conjecture as to the person of one them. It was young Sandford who had made this observation, and upon the first opportunity which offered of his speaking to Isabella apart, he communicated to her his persuasion that he had discovered his friend Henry amongst the crowd, disguised in a clownish dress, and accompanied by another person in the like habit. The probability immediately struck her, though she herself had not made any observation upon the spectators, general or particular.

We forgot to mention in its proper place, that we had a friend amongst the mourners, Zachary Cawdle by name, who had accompanied the hearse all the way from Falmouth in an attendant coach: he was now lodged in Hagley Hall, and it is hardly to be supposed that our fair heroine had failed to make certain enquiries of him, which might now have made any further questions about Henry's appearance at the funeral unnecessary; but the fact was, that these enquiries had not produced any other information from honest Zachary, except that Henry, accompanied by a gentleman who called himself Smith, had parted from him at Falmouth, disclosing nothing more of his future plan, than that he would be at Crowbery within such a time, and hoped to meet him there upon a certain business; to this Zachary added, under the seal of secrecy, that the self-named Mr. Smith was veritably that indetical Mr. Delapoer,
from

from whom Lady Crowbery was rescued by her father within a stage of Gretna Green, and who had been ever since in the East Indies, from whence he was lately returned with an affluent fortune. Here Zachary stopt, and with a sagacious look eyed the young lady, whose knowledge of the secret in his keeping supplied all the rest, which he in justice to his trust suppressed.

All this Isabella had gained from Zachary within a few hours after his arrival, so that when Mr. Sandford imparted to her his supposed discovery of Henry, in company with a person unknown, her own suggestions readily found a name for that person, without resorting to Zachary for any further intelligence. There was one reflection Isabella drew from this account, that was consolatory to her mind in its present state of anxious suspense—Henry had found a father, and under all events was probably secured against any future danger of experiencing distress of circumstances: this consideration also helped her to account in some degree for her cousin's silence in her will, an omission otherwise both inexplicable, and in her sense of it inexcusable.

It had occurred to Sandford, and he suggested it to Isabella, that it was likely Henry would be found somewhere, in or about the house of his deceased benefactor Ratcliffe; and the probability of this so struck that young lady, as to determine her upon putting her projected visit to that mansion into immediate execution. She accordingly, with her father's consent, obtained his chaise for an airing, and immediately directed it to the point she had in view; fortunately for her purpose she was alone, and whilst her heart throbbed with the hopes of meeting the dearest object of its thoughts, reflecting upon the difficulties that darkened all her views
of

of happiness, she trembled as she approached the spot, and dreaded what she most desired, an interview with Henry. At the bottom of a little hanging garden, in front of a neat but humble mansion, her carriage stopt and she got out. A little wicket in a low thorn hedge-row of hornbeam was open, and admitted her into the garden; the slope was rather steep, and she slowly sauntered up it gazing about her on each side, and surveying the small but interesting scene with a pensive sensibility. She was noticed by an old woman, who presented herself at the house door, and asked her commands: Isabella said she wished to see the rooms, and that it was not idle curiosity, but respect for the memory of the late inhabitant had brought her thither.—“Then pray, madam, walk in and welcome, perhaps you belong to the dear young gentleman who is now in the house, and sure enough I am the happiest creature living to see him safe and once more amongst us, after being lost so long: he is in the little back parlour, which was my late master’s study, all alone, and there he has been these two long hours, forbidding me to interrupt him, though I wou’d fain have come in and kept him company, in hopes to have chear’d him a bit, for I know he must be melancholy to think of the days he pass’d in that room with my dear good dead master, who lov’d him as if he had been the father of him.”

This intelligence so agitated the tender spirits of Isabella, that she paused in suspense, and for a while stood musing what to do. At length, having resolved to proceed, she desired to be shewn the room where the gentleman was; the old woman conducted her through a little vestibule into a plain neat parlour, and there pointing to a door that was opposite to the windows, she said

“That

"That is my late master's study; there Mr. Henry is."

Isabella desired to be left, and when the dame had disappeared she approached the door, and with a trembling hand turned the lock, and presented to the sight of Henry an object so welcome and so unexpected, that starting with ecstacy from his seat he exclaimed, "Good Heavens! do I behold Miss Manstock? May I believe my eyes? Are you alone?"

"I am here alone," she replied, whilst blushes overspread her face; "and I confess my purpose was to find you out. I heard you was present at a mournful meeting: you was discover'd, Henry, but not by me."

He approached her respectfully; took her hand, and tenderly pressed his lips upon it. It was visible that he had been in tears, his eyes were red with weeping. He fixt them on her with a look so full of love and transport, as caused the timid sensibility of Isabella to shrink back and retire a few steps, which instantly observing he recollected himself, and in the mildest accent beseeched her to believe he knew the distance he should keep in presence of such purity. "But if I had the power," said he, "by words to paint to you how beautiful you are, how exquisitely charming you appear, thus breaking forth upon me by surprize, and overpowering all my faculties with unexpected joy, you would in candour own I had some struggles to subdue: yet fear me not; if it were possible to lose myself through an excess of love, it is not here, within the mansion of virtue, you cou'd be a witness to my disorder."

"I have no fears," she replied, "I commit myself to you with perfect confidence; and gladly seize the opportunity of conversing with you in private,

private, anxious to assure you that my heart remains unalter'd, that it sympathizes with you in your sorrows, in your joys; for if you have lost a mother, Henry, I am told you have found a father, and that I hope, in some degree, will balance your affliction. As to this estate, which I consider myself as holding in trust for your use, I have only conjecture to assist me in my interpretation of my cousin's will, having receiv'd no private instructions from her before her death; therefore I conjure you, Henry, if you know her wishes, impart them to me fully and without reserve: I am confident it cou'd not be her purpose to pass you over, and heap an useless fortune in your wrong on me."

"Ah! loveliest of women," cried Henry, "of what use is all this world can give to me, without the hope, on which alone I live? If I am bereft of that, I have more than misery can want already; what matters it how a solitary being languishes out an irksome life? Let me sink into obscurity without a name, which only can disgrace the memory of my unhappy mother, and give cause of triumph to her cruel persecutor, who survives her: perhaps my Isabella's father wou'd be wounded in his pride of family, if I were publish'd to the world the heir of Lady Crowbery and the son of Delapoor."

"Henry," cried Isabella, eagerly interrupting him, "you strike upon the very circumstance that causes all my terror and distress: my father's feelings are exactly what you suppose them to be; and all the opposition he ever gave to your pretensions, arose from the suspicion he entertain'd of your being the son of his niece. He now, from the nature of my cousin's will, is persuaded to the contrary of that suspicion, and is become your
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cordial friend: knowing, therefore, that he is now acting towards you under the impression of a mistaken conclusion, what a situation am I in! To avail myself of his delusion, and carry on a deceit against him, is what my nature revolts from; to undeceive him and reveal a secret I have pledged myself to keep, is what I cannot do: hard indeed is that dilemma which puts me under equal difficulties, whether I resort to silence or confession. Nothing can extricate me from it, unless you are so fully possess'd of Lady Crowbery's mind, or have such written instructions in charge, as may either direct me how to act towards my father, or leave me to make use of my own discretion by releasing me from my engagement. If you have any such therefore to report or to produce, impart them to me, I beseech you, for both our sakes."

CHAPTER. VII.

The Interview is brought to a Conclusion.

WHEN our hero heard himself thus earnestly called upon to produce the letter he was encharged with, though his delicacy would have been better gratified, could he have been absent whilst Isabella read it, yet he no longer hesitated to deliver it to her, telling her at the same time that it was written by his mother three days only before her death, and that the contents had never been imparted to him, nor in any respect suggested by him. To this she made answer, by assuring him, she gave perfect credit to his delicacy in the business, and that her only apology for reading it

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in his presence was her wish to be instructed in her cousin's pleasure touching an affair, on which their mutual happiness depended. "I am fetter'd," added she, "till this letter sets me free, if indeed it shall do that: without some clue to guide me, how shall I ever extricate myself from this labyrinth of difficulties, in which I am lost? Oh Henry! before I open this important paper, let me confess to you that I perceive all which is dear to me in life may be decided by it; and I feel a thousand anxious fears, lest fidelity to a fatal promise, and duty to a respected father, should seal me down to silence, and separate us perhaps for ever."

"And wou'd that sad necessity," he demanded, "so terrible to me, cause a regret in you? Does my beloved, my adored Isabella wish to reward her Henry's faithful love? Have I an interest in her heart?"—"You shou'd know that," she tenderly replied, "for you possess it wholly; that fond heart is your's."

Language is nothing; words can give no picture of those soft emotions which a sincere and virtuous passion, when alarmed by dangers, can in the crisis of its fate excite within a feeling bosom. It is then the soul looks through the eyes, and by its own intelligible emanation intimates to the beloved object thoughts and sensations, which no eloquence can so describe. Such was the look that in this interesting moment glanced from Isabella's eyes to Henry's. He had been more or less than man, had he remained unmoved and master of himself. Our hero was a man, one of the bravest and the best of Nature's family; but still he was her son, and by inheritance made subject to those sallies and alarms of passion, which mere mortality cannot at all times conquer and repress. Temperance he had,

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we have given it upon proof recorded in his history; respect he never wanted in the presence of virtue, and virtue was present in the person of Isabella; yet impetuous love hurried him on, and as her fond eyes glanced upon him, he threw his arms in rapture round her beauteous waist, and pressed her ardently in his presumptuous embrace.

I am but Nature's copyist, her scribe, and dare not add or take away without her leave: it is Nature therefore, and not I, that must explain why Isabella pure as the untouch'd lilly, did not shrink away and sever her sweet form from Henry's arms: yet so it was, and so I write it down as my responsible directress dictates. The letter was yet unopened, and now the blushing Isabella, having mildly reproved her too ardent lover, and taken her seat at some little distance from him, read as follows:

“ Fully sensible that my last hour of life is close at
 “ hand, I write to you, my beloved Isabella, whilst
 “ it is yet in my power, a few lines, to be delivered
 “ into your hands by my son, when I shall be no
 “ more. An unexpected meeting with his father,
 “ under most peculiar circumstances, having providentially taken place, I have at their joint instance been prevailed upon to bequeath my
 “ whole fortune to you, making no mention
 “ whatever of my Henry in my will. Their motive for this generous sacrifice has been extreme
 “ delicacy towards my memory; and mine for
 “ complying with it has been confidence in your
 “ justice, and a perfect conviction that my Henry
 “ lives but in the hope of sharing life and all its
 “ interests with you. If this happy union takes
 “ place all will be well, and my spirit shall rest in
 “ peace: if not, alas! no wealth can profit him;
 “ nothing that I can give will save him from des-
 “ pair.

“ pair. Duplicity never was my Isabella’s cha-
 “ racter; I therefore die in the persuasion that
 “ you love my son: that love will inspire you
 “ with the means of reconciling your connection
 “ with him to the feelings of your father, be they
 “ of what sort they may. I leave this to your
 “ conduct and discretion, and for that purpose to-
 “ tally release you from all past promises respect-
 “ ing what in secrecy I have imparted to you: I
 “ only think Lord Crowbery should not know it,
 “ as his insulting temper may in that case provoke
 “ events that might disturb your future peace, and
 “ plunge you into serious distress. May Provi-
 “ dence direct you in its wisdom, and preserve
 “ you in its mercy! Think of me with the can-
 “ dour that belongs to you, pardon my errors,
 “ protect my memory, remember my last wishes:
 “ You and my Henry will have my dying pray-
 “ ers! Farewell for ever!

“ CECILIA.”

Isabella having perused this letter with silent at-
 tention, delivered it to Henry for his reading,
 which, when he had done, he said, as he returned
 it to her—“ My fate is in your hands; whether
 I am or am not avow’d to Sir Roger Manstock, de-
 pends on your pleasure; and so entirely am I re-
 sign’d to it, that if your commands shall be for my
 immediate departure, painful as obedience in that
 case will be, yet I will obey, provided I am not
 banish’d without hope, but may be permitted to
 believe that there is one conclusion in that letter,
 on which all my happiness depends, not falsely
 drawn, and that the fond *persuasion*, in which my
 lamented mother died, has some foundation in
 your heart. There, whilst I hold a place, life
 must be dear to me, and my ambition to deserve

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at distance some remembrance in your thoughts, will animate me to such efforts, as may happily, in time to come, obtain your father's favour. Behold me then, loveliest of women; your devoted creature, and pronounce my doom."

Here Isabella raised her eyes, and turning them upon him, with a look that smiled through tears, replied,—“If ’twas with me to pronounce upon your fate, your happiness wou’d be complete; for why shou’d I affect to disguise what your own observation must have discover’d, that you have all the interest in my heart, which this letter gives you? Well might the dear lamented writer be *persuaded* of a truth too obvious to escape her, nor doubt of an attachment which I, so far from striving to conceal, hold it my point of honour to avow. Hypocrisy has ever been my scorn; I trust that modesty does not need it, and I am certain that your character will ever grace the woman that admires it.”

“Then I am blest indeed!” exclaimed the enraptured lover; “thus honour’d by your approbation, I am fortified against all difficulties: direct me what to do, for I am ready”—“There I am still to seek,” said Isabella, “and time does not allow for our debating this important point with the deliberation it requires. One thing is certain whilst you are undiscover’d you will be sure to find a welcome from my father: come to us then with all your former mystery about you; make your own observations on the spot, we shall have opportunities of further conversation on the subject, and those opportunities perhaps will not be totally unpleasant, though they may not produce all the effects that our uncertainty might wish for. We may renew our walks at least, and you may amuse your fancy with projecting future alterations and embellishments

embellishments in a place that must at all events become your property. We shall remain a few days in this spot, and though we cannot cheer your spirits with amusing scenes or lively company, my best endeavours shall not be wanting to dispel the gloom of sadness, or to share it with you in bewailing our lost friend, and soothing you with all the tender sympathy that a fond faithful heart can feel."

Saying this, she leant her hand on his, and gently pressed it; the sweet manner of it was so modest, and withal so captivating, that all his senses were absorbed in love. — "Now we must part," she said, "my time is out, and these are moments, Henry, that will never stay: but come to us, I charge you come; I shall prepare my father to expect you, and let it be this evening." This said, the lovers separated; Isabella returned to Hagley Hall, and Henry to his father.

CHAPTER. VIII.

The Discovery of a posthumous Paper causes great Sensations.

THE death of Lady Crowbery had so deeply affected Delapoe, that Henry saw with concern a very visible alteration in his state of health, and a fixt melancholy that seemed to take possession of him wholly. Balancing between duty and inclination, he scarce knew how to decide with respect to Isabella's tempting invitation. Upon discoursing with his father, however, he found him so resolved to take up his abode in the neighbourhood of Hagley, that he immediately began

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to cast about in his thoughts for some fit place for him to reside in; and it soon occurred to him that the very house, where his late happy interview with Isabella had taken place, would be of all situations most desirable, if that preferment should devolve upon any person unencumbered with a family: this idea, by a very natural transition, suggested to him the probability of his friend young Sandford's being thought of for that succession; and as he entertained a very high opinion of his merit, he determined to employ his interest with Isabella in his behalf.

This idea Henry communicated to his father, and found him so eager to embrace it, and so pressing for him to lose no time in visiting Sir Roger Manstock, that he set out for Hagley Hall without delay; here he received a very cordial welcome from the worthy Baronet, whom he found alone, and already apprised of his coming by Isabella. Speaking of his niece's death, Sir Roger took notice to Henry of his being overlooked in her will as a matter that caused some surprize, and which he could not well account for, having heard the deceased more than once declare her intentions of providing for him at her death; adding, that he considered himself as heir to those intentions and telling him not to be cast down, for in his friendship he should find a resource against all disappointments.

To this Henry made answer, that the excellent Lady alluded to, who always acted from the best and purest motives, had faithfully fulfilled all promises she had ever made him, and that his grateful respect for her memory would never cease but with life itself. He thanked Sir Roger for the offer of his friendship, which he accepted as the highest honour he could aspire to, and which he would study

study to merit and preserve by every effort in his power; favours of any other sort, he flattered himself he should not stand in need of.

Here their conversation was cut short by the arrival of Doctor Sandford, who had not been many minutes in the room, before Henry had the satisfaction to hear Sir Roger Manstock acquaint him, that, with his daughter's concurrence, he had determined to nominate his son to the living late enjoyed by the Reverend Mr. Ratcliffe. The good man expressed a lively sense of gratitude on this occasion, and his happiness seemed complete.

Henry, in a private conversation with his friend Zachary Cawdle, revived the subject of Billy Williams; and as Zachary was now determined upon retiring from business on his annuity bequeathed to him by Lady Crowbery, he very readily engaged to make over his shop and effects to Williams upon fair and equitable terms, which should be adjusted when that gentleman should obtain a discharge from his ship, and make his appearance at Crowbery, for which place Zachary intended to set out the next morning. This matter being settled to Henry's entire content, for he was much attached to Williams, Zachary began to speak of matters more immediately interesting; and turning to our hero, he said—"In this very room where we are now sitting, I brought you into the world; and surely it is now full time you should assume some proper name and station in society. Life is uncertain; and though, thank God, I feel myself stout and hearty at this present moment, yet we are all liable to casualties, and nobody can say how long it may be before I follow your good mother, in which case you wou'd lose a witness to your birth, whose testimony is most material.

material. You have a father, it is true, whose fortune can in some respect indemnify you for the disinterested; and give me leave to call it, the wanton sacrifice you have made of this noble property, which had else been your's; but that father also, if I have any skill in my profession, is in a very precarious state of health; his spirits sink, and his constitution threatens swift decay. It behoves you therefore, my dear Henry to look about you: if you have put aside your inheritance, in hope of sharing it with the amiable young lady who now possesses it, methinks you wou'd do well to lose no time in bringing that expectancy to bear; and why you shou'd persist in concealing yourself from Sir Roger Manstock, who seems to be so favourably dispos'd, and entertains you with such kindness and regard, is what I cannot understand. You'll pardon me for the freedom I take in talking to you on a subject, in which I am no otherwise concern'd, but as my friendship and good wishes interest me in every thing that relates to you; for in truth, dear Henry, I have a very warm and tender heart towards you, and ever had from the first moment fortune threw you in my way."

"Your zeal," said Henry, "can stand in need of no apology; and I am free to confess to you, that my situation with respect to Sir Roger Manstock becomes every hour more and more irksome to me, as every species of disguise must be. When I know that I am indebted to a misconception for the kindness he shews me, I cannot enjoy the fruits of it with content. It blights the happiness I shou'd else receive in the society of the loveliest of women; and though I have every reason to fear that the discovery of my birth wou'd be instantly follow'd by my dismissal from every hope that

points

points towards an alliance with his amiable daughter, yet my conscience so revolts against deceit, that I will sooner meet the worst of misfortunes, and embrace despair, than persist to act the counterfeited, as I have hitherto been compell'd to do. You therefore see, my worthy friend, how entirely my feelings coincide with your counsel; and I am resolv'd, with Isabella's leave, to-morrow shall not pass without an explanation on my part: let me then request, that you will not set out upon your journey, till that event is over, as it cannot fail to happen that we shall appeal to you."

Zachary signified his perfect compliance with this request, and Henry declared his resolution accordingly. An occurrence in the mean time had come to pass, which anticipated all the consequences incidental to that resolution. Sir Roger Manstock, whilst discoursing with Doctor Sandford upon some particulars relative to the living intended for his son, had occasion to refer to some papers of the late Mr. Ratcliffe, which the Doctor told him were to be found in a certain old fashioned cabinet, where he himself had deposited them upon the death of that gentleman, and of which he kept the key. The papers were easily found; but in taking them out, it appeared to Sir Roger, that there was some secret machinery at the bottom of the cell, in which they laid, for hiding money or valuables in a small compass; and upon a closer scrutiny, a joint was discovered, which, upon the insertion of a penknife, was made to slide back, and in it was found a small packet folded in the form of a letter unsealed. Upon opening this packet, Sir Roger immediately recognized the hand-writing of his brother-in-law Sir Stephen Adamant, and read as follows:

"Particulars

“Particulars relative to my daughter Cecilia, to be communicated to her uncle Sir Roger Mansstock, after my decease.”

This title he read aloud, and here he paused, closing the paper, and observing to his companion, that it was a very extraordinary and to him a very interesting discovery. “I confess to you,” added he, “my curiosity is highly agitated, nay so much am I affected by the suddenness of the surprise, that I can scarce command myself enough to proceed with the perusal of it. It seems to have been my brother’s purpose that I should be made acquainted with the contents, yet no such communication was ever made to me, so that in honour I am hardly satisfied that I ought to read any further. Have you, Doctor Sandford, any knowledge of this paper? You was most in the confidence of Sir Stephen; if you have any information on the subject, give it to me; if not, advise me what to do.”

“I have nothing to guide me but conjecture,” replied the Doctor, “but I should presume there need be no hesitation on your part to read what professes to have been written for your information. The early attachment of our dear lamented lady is well known to every friend of the family; and I should guess the paper may refer to that: there has ever been a mystery consequential of that transaction; and as it is probably developed in that posthumous packet, I will with your permission retire, whilst you examine it in private.” So saying, he left the room, and Sir Roger read as follows:—

“Particulars relative to my daughter Cecilia,
“lia, to be communicated to her uncle,
“Sir Roger Mansstock, after my decease.”

“Upon

“ Upon the 14th day of August, 1761, my
 “ daughter, then of the age of sixteen and up-
 “ wards, secretly escaped from Hagley-House, in
 “ company with a young cornet, the honourable
 “ Henry Delapoer, purposing to effect a stolen
 “ marriage at Gretna Green.

“ The young man, I confess, had made fair
 “ and open proposals for my daughter; but I had
 “ other views, and positively prohibited the con-
 “ nection. He was formed to engage a heart like
 “ Cecilia’s; his person was fine, his manners and
 “ address were captivating in the extreme. Alas!
 “ mistaken man that I am, I knew not to what
 “ extremes her passion was capable of hurrying
 “ her, and foolishly expected that my authority
 “ could extinguish it. Love and nature set my
 “ power at nought, and my child, (in every other
 “ instance of her life the most dutiful creature brea-
 “ thing) broke loose from every filial tie, and
 “ eloped with her admirer. Furious in my wrath
 “ and equally exasperated against both parties, I
 “ pursued them along the road with such unremit-
 “ ted exertion, that upon their very last post I
 “ overtook and surprised them in a public inn
 “ where they were changing horses.

“ Here I forced them (Oh! fatal violence!) from
 “ each other’s arms, in spite of prayers, entreaties,
 “ and even confession, on Cecilia’s part, of an an-
 “ ticipated consummation, that took from inno-
 “ cence its virgin gloss, and in the course of time,
 “ to the dishonour of my house and the ruin of my
 “ mind’s future peace, occasioned my poor child
 “ to be an unmarried mother, whilst her disconso-
 “ late lover had left his native country and embark-
 “ ed for the East Indies.

“ Early in the month of May ensuing, Cecilia
 “ was secretly delivered in my own house of a male
 “ infant

“ infant. Zachary Cawdle, a faithful man, and
“ skilful in his profession, assisted her in that pain-
“ ful extremity.—Heaven and earth! can I describe
“ my anguish, my remorse, my terrors, in those
“ moments! What would I then have given could
“ I have recalled the banished father of my wretch-
“ ed grandson! How did my conscience rack me
“ with remorse for having torn two hearts asun-
“ der, pledged to each other by every sacred vow,
“ and virtually though not legally married! Oh!
“ had I then had mercy in my wrath, had I allow-
“ ed for nature, for affection, for the weakness of
“ a fond doating girl of sixteen years of age, what
“ misery had I prevented! what shame had I avoid-
“ ed! Let no father henceforth tread in my un-
“ wary steps—they will but lead him to remorse
“ and agony.

“ And now ten years are past, whilst I have
“ seen my daughter married to a despicable lord,
“ who is her tyrant rather than her husband. In
“ her my generation legitimately stops; no fruit
“ can spring from such a stock; her bed is barren,
“ and her heart is broken. Thank Heaven, my
“ grandson Henry still survives; protected, rear-
“ ed and educated by the best of men, and of friends
“ the most faithful, I see him fostered into early
“ virtues by the forming hand of Ratcliffe. God
“ of all mercies, bless and prosper the mysterious
“ issue of my hapless child! Whilst my sad daugh-
“ ter lives and is Lord Crowbery’s wife, I dare not
“ venture to avow the son of indiscretion. Hard
“ fate for him, poor innocent, for my Cecilia, for
“ myself!

“ Is there a friend now left to me on earth, in
“ whose humane and honest heart I can repose my
“ sorrows and my secret? Let me still hope there
“ is;

" is; surely Sir Roger Manstock is that candid that
" trust-worthy friend.

" To Sir Roger Manstock, to the uncle of my
" child, in confidence I bequeath this mournful
" narrative of my errors and misfortunes, implor-
" ing him, by all that he holds sacred, to protect
" and father the last relict of my house, my name-
" less unacknowledged child, to whom I trust a
" mother's love and justice will bequeath that pro-
" perty, which in this firm persuasion I have de-
" vised to her, and put into her free and absolute
" disposal, without limitation or restraint. Let
" Henry then take his father's name; I would not
" leave a stigma on my daughter's memory. May
" Crowbery never have to say he took the refuse of
" a favoured lover!

" Sensible that I am hastening to the close of
" life, I would fain dedicate my short abiding time
" to atonement and repentance. To you there-
" fore, Sir, my brother and my friend, I address
" this paper, avowing a full sense of my past errors,
" and a deep contrition for that haughty spirit of
" revenge, which prompted me to blast the happi-
" ness of two persons formed for each other, wed-
" ded in spirit and in heart; and who, but for my
" fatal interference would have blest the remnant
" of my days. To you, Sir, my brother and my
" friend, I once more solemnly bequeath my
" grandson Henry: you are yourself a father; you
" have a lovely daughter two years younger than
" my boy; nature has taught you how to judge of
" my sensations by your own. To your family
" my fortune would have devolved had not this son
" of my Cecilia stood between us: may I not form
" a distant hope that time and education may here-
" after so adorn and grace the work of nature, as
" to make him worthy your regard and love? The

" offset

"outset is auspicious; the promise of his infant
 "years is flattering in the extreme. Should this
 "fair blossom ripen into that perfection, which its
 "early bloom gives hope of, and should your
 "sweet child, my pretty god-daughter, when time
 "with lenient hand has moulded her soft beauties
 "into womanhood, be touched with tender pity
 "and esteem for my adopted Henry, need I des-
 "pair of your candour; or must the want of that
 "last form, that my precipitancy interrupted,
 "haunt him through life, and cast him off from
 "happiness without his fault? May Heaven in-
 "spire your heart with sentiments more generous!
 "and may he, who mixes blood from no ignoble
 "source with that which he derives from me, me-
 "rit a blessing great as my fond fancy has devised.
 "Farewell!"

 CHAPTER IX.

*The Counsel of a Friend in a Dilemma. More Secrets
 are brought to Light.*

THE perusal of this paper, which pointed out
 to Sir Roger Manstock the son of his niece,
 in the person of Henry, the admirer of his daugh-
 ter, threw him into deep meditation, and exceed-
 ingly perplexed him how to act in a case, where
 decision on either side militated against his feelings.
 The appeal was solemn, that pleaded in favour of
 the youth, the objection to his illegitimacy, and
 even to his proximity of blood, was no slight one,
 and Sir Roger's mind was a long time balanced be-
 tween difficulties. One point his conscience saw

in the clearest light—the equity of Henry's claim to the property of his grandfather; and, according to the high sense of honour natural to him, he interpreted the paper he had just been reading: but how to act with respect to his daughter, whether to oppose or to countenance her attachment, was the question that embarrassed him. On the opposing side, there was a strong repugnance, arising from his habits of thinking, and from a certain pride of family, which revolted from the stain of illegitimacy; on the favourable side; there was much occurred to mitigate the rigour of these thoughts. The character of Henry pre-eminently pleaded in his behalf; the fatal consequences of paternal obduracy, so forcibly set forth in the recital of Sir Stephen, was a striking example before his eyes; and the pathetic adjuration, at the close of that recital, was an affecting appeal to his heart, which was sensibly felt.

'Tis in a crisis like this, when the mind is fluctuating between doubt and decision, that the voice of a friend is most welcome, and then it is that new reasons, or reasons differently expressed and dilated, seldom fail to cut the knot that puzzles us to unravel. Sir Roger rung his bell, and requested the company of Doctor Sandford.

A better arbitrator could not be chosen; he read the paper attentively, and when called upon for his sentiments upon it, deliberately replied as follows: "I am not surpris'd at the discovery, which this paper gives; for though I was not a party to the secret of this young man's birth, I was ever in my private opinion persuaded of his being the son of those very parents now disclos'd to us. Well may the unhappy writer bewail his own obduracy; I knew the party rejected, and thought him every way deserving of the alliance he
courted;

courted; Sir Stephen knew my sentiments, for he drew them from me, and I honestly committed my opinion to his consideration; it did not tally with his own, and I lost his confidence by the sincerity with which I gave it. Mr. Ratcliffe, in consequence of this, had charge of the infant—a better choice cou'd not be made, a worthier, wiser, more enlighten'd mind no man possess'd—to an education so excellent, the son of your niece did ample justice. Nature never form'd a more engaging person, instruction never cultivated a more accomplish'd mind."

Here Sir Roger interposed, declaring his entire concurrence in this testimony to his merits—"But with what face," he demanded, "can I hold up to the world the spurious issue of my deluded niece? What will Lord Crowbery say? What will the world at large say to an adoption like this? I shou'd be glad to hear your sentiments upon this point of difficulty."

"With this paper in my hand," replied the Doctor, "I cannot resist the appeal it contains, nor refuse being advocate for the feelings of the writer of it. When I see a father taking on himself the reproach of being sole author of his daughter's errors and misfortunes, and weigh the circumstances that attended their elopement and arrest upon the way, I can hardly be induced to call their issue illegitimate. I shou'd go too far, if I was to deny the right of a parent to restrain, or to direct, the passions of his child; but Sir Stephen went farther, and exerted more authority than belong'd to him, when he compell'd a marriage with the Lord Viscount Crowbery; that is an act of tyranny over the human heart, which I hold in abhorrence. What vows were interchang'd between your niece and her first lover we cannot know

know, but we can well conjecture they were solemn and sincere on both sides. Their hearts were married, tho' the *blacksmith* was not found that wou'd have clinch'd the chain. Shall then the son of love and promise be disclaim'd, because a few hours interven'd, and force was employ'd to tear their hands asunder, and compel them to a separation? Mark how the parent suffers in his conscience for this act of cruelty! So wou'd not I for all this world can give me. Henry is a virtuous youth: affix what criminality you please to the authors of his birth, we cannot so pervert all sense of justice, as to attach their stain to his character, however much we may wish to cover the memory of his mother from the malevolent attacks of Lord Crowbery and others, who may be basely dispos'd to blast it. This, I confess, shou'd be avoided as much as possible; and surely it will be no impossible thing to do that by proper precautions, with respect to Lord Crowbery at least, so long as he survives, which seems to have been the clear intention of the deceased lady, when she forbore to name her son in her will; and as you have told me Henry himself was the chief promoter of this omission, I cannot doubt but he was fully acknowledged by his mother before she died.

"I don't doubt that," resumed Sir Roger, "and I hold my daughter bound to restore him to his inheritance upon every principle of honour and justice; but I am not bound to give him my daughter also."—"Far be it from me," replied the Doctor, "to say that; your daughter's inclination, must precede a step so essential to her own happiness as that."—"But am I bound to follow, with my consent, her inclinations, if they should point to him?"—"I must decline an answer to that question, being so partial as I am to Henry."—"Why that is answering it," replied Sir Roger, "to the fullest extent."

tent." Here their conference was interrupted by a servant, who announced a gentleman of the name of Smith, that requested a few minutes conversation in private with Sir Roger Manstock. Order being given for the gentleman's admittance, and Doctor Sandford having withdrawn, the father of our hero presented himself to the worthy Baronet, and addressed him to the following effect:-

"I am personally unknown to you, Sir Roger Manstock, but am no stranger to your character, and hold it in the most perfect respect: I have therefore solicited a few minutes of your leisure, and you have politely granted it, for which I thank you, and will study not to abuse your patience, I have sent in a name by your servant, which, in your presence, I should be ashamed to wear, being only an assumed one, for reasons that, I trust, you will think not unworthy of a gentleman. My real name is Henry Delapoer, which, in times past, you may have heard attached to that of the loveliest, and by me the most lamented, of her sex; pardon me, if for the present I can proceed no further."

Sir Roger started with amaze; he smote his hands together with more than usual energy, and gazed upon the stranger with intense curiosity—"May I believe what I hear!" he cried, "Are you really Mr. Delapoer, the honourable Henry Delapoer, father—" There he stopt short, and checked the words that were upon his lips.—"Sir," interjected the visitor, "you was proceeding with your speech; may I request you to fill up the sentence?"

"You may," replied Sir Roger after a short pause, "the words I was about to add were, the father of my niece's son."—"My conscience then is clear," said Delapoer, "you are possessed of the secret,

secret, and I have broke no trust. Yes, Sir, I am that very person; miserable in the recollection of the bitterest disappointment that ever blasted human happiness, but honoured in the virtues of that son, who is at once the memorial of our misfortune, and the relict of our love. I may now say to Sir Roger Manstock all that a wounded heart suggests; I may speak of my sorrows, of my affection, of my despair, which is now hurrying me to the grave, where my betrothed, my ever-loved Cecilia sleeps." Here a gust of tears interrupted his speech for a few instants; he wiped them away, and proceeded—"It is now my request; and I hope your charity will grant it, that my remains may be allowed to rest in the vault beside those of that fainted being, who was by every obligation sacred in the eye of Heaven my true and all but legal wife. Sir, we were bound together by the holiest ties. Accursed be the breath that dares to contaminate the purity of my Cecilia's fame! If there was crime in our precipitancy, that crime be on my head, I will embrace the whole of the offence; let her unfeeling father take on himself the responsibility of our separation! Sir, I have held it matter of the strictest conscience, ever since that fatal moment, to keep unviolated the marriage bed, and I have religiously fulfilled that sacred duty. One melancholy consolation Heaven vouchsafed; Providence employed the arm of my son to rescue me from death, when I was a prisoner on board a ship of the enemy, and at the last stage of existence; he brought me to the port of Falmouth; his piety and care preserved my life; fortune directed Cecilia to the same spot; I passed some days by the couch of that dying martyr, and she expired in the arms of me and of my son. Grant me then, I beseech you, my

my last earnest prayer, and let my corpse repose by her's."

The Baronet, whose long silence had been the effect of his sympathy in the feelings of the speaker, now found himself called upon for a reply at a time when he was much more inclined to give a loose to tears than to words. He commanded himself notwithstanding so far as to assure his visiter, that his suit was granted, and to add withal, that he hoped it would be many years before that promise could be claimed. To this Delapoer replied, with many acknowledgements, that nothing but his conviction that no time was to be lost could have excused to himself the rude intrusion of so unseasonable a visit.

Here he paused, and seemed preparing to take his leave, when it occurred to Sir Roger as proper to apprise him, that he had possessed himself by chance of a posthumous paper, written by his niece's father, which had thrown great light on his state of mind, and which at the same time devolved a duty upon him, on the part of his daughter, of reinstating Henry in the whole of his grandfather's estate. "This," added he, "is an act of justice which I think I can take upon myself to say will be infallibly performed on our part; and I shall now put the paper into your hands for your perusal, and very highly interesting it is to you, Mr Delapoer, and your representative."

CHAPTER X.

Our History records a dreadful Incident.

DELAPOER having read the paper, returned it to Sir Roger, observing, that although the writer's change of sentiments came too late for redress, it was to be hoped they were in time for the full purposes of repentance. He then proceeded to disclose to Sir Roger the state of his own circumstances in point of fortune, which, being settled upon Henry, would at all events make him an affluent man. "There is but one object in life," added he, "can make him a happy one. If I know his thoughts rightly, it is the person, not the property, of the present heiress of this estate, which he would receive as the greatest bounty she could bestow upon him."

To this Sir Roger simply replied, that Henry was certainly a very amiable young man; and Delapoer, too delicate to press his wishes any further, politely took his leave and departed. In fact, the mind of the worthy Baronet was by no means made up to any determined measure, and as the recent death of Lady Crowbery secured him from any present call from either of the parties, he very gladly availed himself of the excuse for holding back his opinion, till it was more matured by experience and reflection.

Henry now wished to throw aside a mask he was no longer compelled to wear, and to declare himself to Sir Roger Manstock; but as it was necessary, in the first place, to consult Isabella's opinion in the case, he followed her into the park, where he understood she was gone to take her evening walk.

walk. When he had mounted the hill that rose from the house, he caught a distant glimpse of her, as she was entering a grove of oaks, and immediately set out towards the spot with all the speed he could. He was yet at some distance, when a female shriek was heard as coming from some one in the grove, which struck him to the heart with the apprehension that his lovely Isabella was in danger or alarm. Already nearly breathless with his exertions, terror gave him all but wings upon a call so pressing, and he sprung forwards towards the voice with an impetuosity undescrivable.

Swift as his motion was, our history demands a pause before we bring him to the rescue of the affrighted Isabella, whilst we account for the cause of that shriek so terrible to the ears of love.

In the near neighbourhood of Hagley House, without the enclosure of the park, there was a lonely mansion, tenanted by a person whose melancholy profession it was to take charge of those unhappy beings, who are deprived of reason. One of those distracted objects, and probably the most pitiable in the whole wretched fraternity, was a young man of the name of Saunders, only son of a respectable clergyman, who had bred him in the line of his own profession, and given him an excellent education with that view, both at school and university. The youth, whom nature had endowed with uncommon talents, had more than equalled all the warmest expectations of a fond exulting father. Every honour that moral conduct could merit, every prize that successful genius could contend for, had been fairly gained, and worthily possessed, by this young student; but strong imagination and a feeling heart, the natural concomitants of superior genius, had conspired against the peace of poor Saunders, and by a disappointment
in

in love, had made wreck of a mind full freighted with science, and richly endowed with every noble quality. The object of his passion was unfortunately one, to whom, in point of rank and circumstances, he could not aspire, and though she felt his merits, and was flattered by his attentions, yet his suit was peremptorily and proudly rejected by her father, who had higher views, and overruled the affections of his child with absolute authority. The same fine taste that taught him to select and admire the purest models of classical composition, inspired him with a passion for the elegant and beautiful Louisa Beaufort: his opportunities of conversing with her were not frequent; for Sir Ferdinand her father was not easy of access from one so much his inferior, and Saunders was reduced to a variety of humble shifts to make known to Louisa the flame that was consuming him, and gradually undermining the foundations of a solid understanding. The smile, which at some stolen moment, she could bestow upon him, was his only hope; on these reflections he fed, and, by the help of a vivid fancy, sketched out dreams and visions of happiness, which in one fatal moment were for ever blasted, by the intelligence of her being married to a titled lover. From this instant his deportment became irregular and capricious: at first he was loud and vehement in his complaints; he talked of the affair to all his friends, professed to treat it with contempt, and railed against the sex in general, venting upon them all the invectives, which his memory or imagination could suggest: he ransacked the poets ancient and modern for epigrams and lampoons, and had by heart every tag and fragment of satire, which made for his purpose, and which Greek, Latin, or English could supply. If any one of his acquaintanc spoke in praise of a woman,

woman, or even toasted the health of his mistress, he was ready with a dash at his folly, which oftentimes would have brought on serious discussions, had he not been very generally considered as a licensed railer, or had his companions been as prompt for quarrel as himself.

This humour being spent, his mind took a sudden turn to the contrary extreme, and poor Saunders was no more to be found in society; sullen and inaccessible, he shut himself into his college room, and centering all his ideas, heretofore so wild and excursive, in one single point, and dwelling invariably upon that with pertinacious melancholy, the vigour of his intellect began to melt away, whilst his constitution, partaking of the same debility, and attenuated by long fasting, was hastening to decay by actual inanition. A student, late so regular in his duties, could not absent himself, from college hours without drawing the attention of his tutor and other members of the society upon him; the former of these one day took means of surprising him in his room, where he discovered him on his knees, employed in loud and fervent prayer, to which his presence gave not the smallest interruption, whilst the poor suppliant continued to deplore his wretched state of mind in terms truly piteous and disconsolate, intermixt with petitions most earnest and devout for the preservation of his reason. His pitying visitor was melted at the scene of such distress, and having waited for a proper interval, applied such consolation as his charity could suggest upon the emergency, and instantly dispatched a letter to the father, apprising him of the dangerous condition to which his pupil was reduced. This sad intelligence soon brought the afflicted parent to be a witness of the total ruin of his hopes; he

took the poor distracted creature with him to his own house, where, finding no relief to his disorder, but, on the contrary, an encrease of every symptom to an extravagance, that kept him under hourly alarm, he at last resolved to resign him wholly into the hands of a keeper, and in this house, before described, he placed him, where, for some months, he had been confined under proper regimen, though without any progress towards a cure, of which his wretched parent now began to lose all hope.

It had so chanced this very evening, that with a cunning peculiar to his distemper he had contrived to elope from his keeper, and running out of the house at random, had made his way into Hagley Park, escaping the sight of his pursuers by hiding himself in the grove, where he was lying buried under the thickest of the underwood, when chance brought the beauteous Isabella, in her solitary ramble, to the very spot where he was concealed. A glimpse of her fair form, which his quick eye caught through the bushes, roused him instantly from his lair, and springing on her like a couchant tyger on the unwary passenger, he seized the trembling victim in his arms, roaring out in a yell of transport—"Have I caught you then at last, vile perjur'd woman! traitress to my love! murderer of my peace! false, faithless Louisa, you have driven me to desperation; you have made me what I am, mad as the fires of Hecla, wild as the waves that swallow navigation up; and now syren, I'll be reveng'd upon you for my transformation; a beast of your own creation shall devour you; I'll pluck asunder those fine limbs, and scatter them to all the points of heaven. Come, come, no struggling; hence with all this frippery! away with it! you are but Nature's counterfeit; we'll have her full in sight, and then."—

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Upon the instant, in that saving momentary crisis on which humanity will not admit of speculation's pause, our hero Henry, breathless, aghast, led thither by that unseen clue, which providence had graciously bestowed for virtue's timely rescue, sprung upon the lunatic, and with a phrensy equal to his own, grasping him in his arms, hurled him violently to the ground, never quitting his hold, but accompanying him in his fall: in the same moment, the dishevelled Isabella, her cloak, handkerchief, and clothes torn from her, dropt inanimate at his side, without uttering even a sigh that shewed signs of life. Distracted with the sight, still he did not venture to let loose his desperate antagonist, who raved and foamed in all the furious excess of phrenzy, yelling and gnashing with his teeth, a spectacle too horrible for contemplation. Emaciated as he was, the very spectre of famine, still his madness gave him nerves almost supernatural, and in their grappling all the vigour Henry's active limbs could furnish, sometimes scarce sufficed to keep him under, and hold him down extended on his back; at length the wretched creature gave one desperate struggle, then uttered a direful groan, and swooned upon the spot, stretching his limbs as if in the last pang of life.

Happily at this moment the keeper and his follower, guided to the spot by the yells and howlings of their patient, made their appearance, to the unspeakable relief of our exhausted hero, whose terrors for the beloved object, lying breathless by his side, were now become too agonizing to endure. Instantly he raised her in his arms, replaced the scattered fragments of her dress with tenderest attention, arranging it in a manner as decorous as her situation and his own distraction would admit, and calling out to the keeper for

assistance in recovering her from her swoon. The man had skill, and was not wanting in humanity; he knew withal the quality of the lady who stood in need of his assistance, and was terrified, not less on his own account than on her's, for the consequences of what had happened: bidding his servant take charge of the lunatic, by tying up his hands, he applied himself directly to the recovery of the lady, and drawing out a case of lancets, recommended the immediate opening of a vein; this was eagerly acceded to by Henry, and in a few seconds the pure blood that fed the veins of the fairest form in nature sprung forth from the lancet, and at the same time the brightest eyes that ever lover looked upon, unveiled their lids, and fixt their sight on Henry, who, whilst assisting the operation just performed, had received upon his person the full gushing tribute of that sanguine stream so much dearer to him than what fed his own fond heart. The sight of this, to which in his confusion he had not adverted, so terrified the reviving Isabella, that the first sign she gave of recollection was a scream of terror on the discovery, crying out to the operator—"Leave, leave me, and staunch his wounds; he is bleeding to death, and do not think I will survive him."

Joy seized the heart of Henry to hear the voice of his beloved Isabella, and to hear it first employed in anxious concern for him; he eagerly assured her he was not wounded; that the blood which alarmed her was her own; and upon these assurances, the stream that had stopped began to flow again, and her senses grew clear by the revulsion. When her arm was bound up, and her mind became composed, her attention was attracted by the disorder of her dress; surveying the confusion and derangement which her person had undergone, she perceived that

that certain articles had been replaced by hands not practised in those offices, and the sensation covered her with blushes: the emotion was not lost upon Henry; he could interpret what was passing in her thoughts, and took occasion, with a delicacy peculiar to himself, to allay and soothe her inquietude. She turned a look upon him that beggars all description; love beamed in her eyes, gratitude filled them with tears; then having caught a glimpse of Saunders, as he was under custody of his keeper, turned away with shuddering from the sight, and fell upon Henry's neck crying out—"Oh my Henry! my preserver! from what horrors have you rescued me!"—Let those that have the powers of description paint his transports if they can; I sink beneath the task, and recommend it to the reader's fancy, if ever he experienced joy like this; if not, I wish he may deserve it, and obtain it.

The wretched object that had occasioned all this terror now engaged their attention; he had recovered from his swoon, but so wan and woe-begone as would have extracted pity from a heart of a stone; he was sitting on the ground, his hands confined with a bandage swathed round his wrists; he rolled his eyes about in wild disorder, and at last fixing them on his keeper, drooped his head, gave a deep sigh, and burst into tears. He was now at once become as meek and humble as he had been outrageous, and reason seemed to have revisited his mind with the return of temperance.—"I am a very wretched creature," he cried, "and sensible of my misfortunes, that sometimes drive me into extravagancies I never fail to repent of: I know it is for my good that this worthy gentleman ties up my hands; but if he wou'd have the charity to set me at liberty, I wou'd convince him
that

that I am not unfit to be trusted with the use of them; if he will not grant me this favour, I shou'd be much beholden to him, wou'd he have the kindness to remove a few paces out of sight, whilst I speak a word in the way of atonement to the gentleman I have offended. I have a secret on my mind, which I am desirous of imparting to him, and I can assure him, on my honour, I am this moment as perfectly in my senses as any man in England."

Here the keeper turned a look upon him, which he quickly understood as a sign for silence, and obeyed: a look no less intelligent was passing at the same moment in another quarter, for Henry, fixing his eyes upon the keeper's follower, recognized the person of the assassin O'Rourke, and perceiving certain indications in the fellow's countenance, which convinced him he was right, he said to him in a whisper—"Don't be alarm'd, O'Rourke, for I shall not betray you; if you execute this melancholy office faithfully and humanely, you are in a way to atone to society for the crime you have committed."

CHAPTER. XI.

Which describes the Effects of that Incident, and concludes the Tenth Book of our History.

POOR Saunders being now removed, and the operation of the bleeding having succeeded in restoring Isabella to the full possession of her senses, and in some degree of her strength, she declared herself able to walk to the house, and forbade the proposal of sending for a carriage, as it would

would create an alarm which could hardly fail of finding its way to her father. With her natural grace and good humour she accepted the apologies of the keeper of the lunatics, Gordon by name, who was very anxious to exculpate himself to the heiress of Hagley, and to tender his further services, if occasion required. In accounting for the escape of his patient, through the negligence of his servant, he took occasion to observe by the way, that a derangement of the reason, proceeding from disappointed love, was universally experienced to be the very worst species of madness that human nature was subject to; this, he said, was unhappily the case of Mr. Saunders, whom he despaired of as perfectly incurable.

"Alas!" cried Henry, "I pity him from my soul: I dare say his story is a melancholy one, but we will not trouble you to relate it."—This he said as a hint to Gordon, that any farther discourse on the subject, in Isabella's hearing, should be avoided; and it might be in part from the same motive that she declined his offer to attend upon her home, relying solely on the arm of her protector for her support by the way, and leaving Gordon to resume his melancholy vocation in the mansion of misery, on the skirts of the common, adjoining to the park.

Henry now, for the first time in his life, regretted the length of way he had to measure with his lovely but languid charge, and proceeded slowly and cautiously, regardful of every motion that might disturb her, and directing every step for her security and ease. With hearts full of gratitude to Providence, and glowing with the tenderest affection for each other, they walked silently on till they reached the boundary of the grove, where they came in view of the house, upon an open lawn.

lawn, that sloped with a gradual descent for the rest of their way. Here they were descried by Sir Roger and Doctor Sandford, as they were walking and conversing together within a few paces of the house; the Baronet observing that Isabella walked slowly, and seemed supported by Henry, on whose arm she was leaning, instantly took alarm, and calling out to the servants, who happened then to be out of the way, was heard by young Sandford, who, bolting out of the hall-door, flew to the call.—“Run, I beseech you,” said Sir Roger, pointing to the spot, “run to Isabella yonder, and tell me what has happen’d, for I greatly fear some accident has befallen, or some illness seiz’d her!”—Whilst these words were on his lips, the eager messenger caught sight of the object they referred to, and, seized with the like terror, sprung forwards with his utmost speed, whilst Sir Roger, trembling with apprehension, caught hold of his friend by the arm, and stood motionless on the spot, in dreadful expectation of the event. In the same moment, whilst Sandford was straining every nerve against the hill, Isabella, taken suddenly with a giddiness and loss of sight, had come to a stop, and unable to keep her feet, had fallen into Henry’s arms, who, with one knee upon the ground, was supporting her whole weight on his breast and shoulder, himself pale as ashes, and oppressed with such agony of soul, as to be almost in the very act of fainting, when Sandford came most critically to his assistance. The house-servants mean time had seen what was going on, and taken the alarm; a pair of horses had fortunately been put to the chaise, and were ready in the stable yard; one of the servants had presence of mind to order them to the spot immediately, which was as instantly obeyed. During this operation, Sir
Roger

Roger remained immoveable, a spectacle of pity : Sandford saw his distress, and as soon as ever the chaise and servants came to the assistance of Isabella, ran back with all haste to Sir Roger, making signs, and calling out by the way that he had good news, all was well, and no danger. Two servants had very considerably mounted behind the carriage, and by their help the faint and languid Isabella was lifted to the seat, and placed upon it as much at her length as it admitted of : she now opened her eyes, and cast them round in search for her preserver ; he was sitting on the ground totally exhausted, and in a situation, as it seemed more piteably helpless than her own. She would not move without him, and he could not stir without help towards her.—“ Lay me on the floor of the chaise,” he cried, “ and let me expire at her feet.”—She heard his voice, but luckily the words did not reach her ear : at that instant she started into life, and recovered as one out of a trance ; the mist vanished from before her eyes, and seeing Henry on the ground, she conjured him to arise and come to her in the chaise. Her father and Doctor Sandford now approached : Sir Roger’s agitation, though much assuaged by what had been told him, was still very great, and as he came up to the chaise, the door of which was held open, she cried out—“ Oh ! my beloved father, be in no alarm on my account ; dismiss your fears for me, and exert all your care for the recovery of my heroic preserver, to whose courage, under Providence, I am indebted for my life.”—Henry was now on his legs, and re-animated with the sound of her voice, seemed to have lost his debility with the terror that had created it : as he presented himself to her sight, Isabella exclaimed,—“ Oh ! blessed be Heaven, my protector lives !” Upon these

these words, Sir Roger turned a look upon him, in which that excess of gratitude, which will not admit of language, was so strikingly depicted, that, as he threw his arms about our hero's neck, he seemed to give him his whole heart with the embrace. His cheeks were wet with tears, he trembled and was faint; but nothing could persuade him to avail himself of the chaise; he peremptorily insisted upon Henry's taking his seat by Isabella—"Go, go," he cried, "I will not rob you of the honour you have earn'd; with you the darling of my soul is safe; take the place you so well merit, and let the same arm that sav'd my child, support her."

END OF BOOK THE TENTH.

BOOK

BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

CHAPTER I.

*Describes what our Heroine is, and what we wish
our Virgin Readers to be.*

THE time is so nearly approaching, when I must close this history, that I am now in the situation of a man, who, being on the point of parting from friends, in whose company he has taken a long and pleasant tour, is anxious to call to mind any faults or omissions he may have fallen into, that he may explain such as will bear a justification, and ask pardon for what demands an apology.

To enter on a review of all my errors, is a task above my hands; but there is one, I apprehend, apparently too gross to be overlooked by any of my readers; I mean that of neglecting to describe the person of my heroine. If this is a crime, it is the more unpardonable, forasmuch as I cannot plead oversight and inadvertency in excuse of it; I have kept her portrait wilfully in its case, and not disclosed even the colour of her eyes, or set to view a single lock of her hair. Fielding's Sophia had locks of glossy black, more modern novels give their heroines flaxen tresses and azure eyes; there is a fashion in beauty; perhaps my Isabella had neither the jet of the raven nor the ivory of the swan: I would prefix to these volumes an engraving from her portrait, but Henry would not let it out of his hands; and our great artists are so fully employed, that not one was at leisure to go down to Manstock house to take the copy.

Now,

Now, as I have not the vanity to attempt an undertaking, which I believe no author has yet succeeded in, I will not aim to describe what will not bear a description: singularity or deformity may be delineated by the vehicle of words; perfect beauty eludes the power of language. Let it suffice for me to say, upon the faith of an historian, that my heroine was all the most doating lover, when dreaming of his mistress, fancies her to be, and something more than the self-admiring beauty beholds, when she examines herself in the glass. Yet in many things she fell short of some, whom I have heard extolled above the modesty of praise: her eyes could not express what their's excel in; when they sparkled, it was with benevolence; when they languished, it was with pity; they were not repulsive enough to look a modest man out of countenance, nor attractive enough to inspire an impudent man with hope; good nature dimpled round her lips, that encased two rows of purest pearls, but scorn never pouted in the one, and the grin of folly never was put on to disclose the other: her voice was melody that kept the middle tones, for it could neither sound the pitch of an affected scream, nor grumble in the base note of a sullen murmur: her motions were the expressive marks that characterized her mind; composed and temperate, rage never agitated them; pride never distorted them; light and elastic when she hastened to the succour of the wretched, she neither aped the languor of sickness, nor the mincing step of affectation: she danced gracefully, but not like a professor; loved music, but was no performer; had an eye for nature, but never libelled a single feature of it by pen or pencil: she had read sufficiently for her years, and profitably for her instruction; she could express her

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her thoughts in speaking or in writing elegantly, and without embarrassment; but she possest in its perfection, the still happier gift of a patient ear whilst others were speaking, and of a polite attention to what they spoke. Being the only child of her parents, the little bickerings of brothers and sisters never irritated her temper, nor did the triumphs of a rival ever fan one spark of envy in her breast: educated entirely by an excellent mother, she had no communication with governesses and servants, nor any friendships with caballing misses. That she was deceived in supposing her heart so pre-occupied by filial affection, as to be unaffailable by love, these sheets have sufficiently evinced; but when she found herself surpris'd into a tender attachment, and fully understood the merits of the person who inspired it, she scorn'd to masque herself in false appearances, play'd off no vain coquetries to teaze and tantalize her lover by affected scruples and counterfeited fears, but with a candour, that result'd from her purity of thought, gave him to know the interest he had gain'd, justly conceiving artifice need not be us'd to smother a confession, which honour dictat'd, and delicacy might avow.

If I offend against refinement, by describing an ingenuous nature, I make no other answer but by an appeal to the hearts of my readers, as in like cases I have done to those of my spectators; let them decree! when men of doubtful characters, for doubtful purposes, approach the fair, let the fair resort to their defences; I am no casuist in a case of cunning, nor am I fond of working to my point by crook'd paths, or describing the base properties of degenerated nature. If any of my female readers has been taught to think hypocrisy a virtue, by the necessity she has been under of resorting to it,

it, I will not argue against her prejudices for a friend that has been so useful to her, I can only say it is not a virtue I am studious to bestow upon the character of Isabella.

CHAPTER. II.

A modest Suitor does not hurt his Cause.

WE left our heroine in distress, we therefore seize the first instant that our history admits of to resort to her again, and now we find her with Henry at her side, under escort to Hagley House, where we commit her to the care of her assembled friends, with every anxious wish for her speedy and entire recovery.

As soon as the superintendant of the insane patients had seen poor Saunders securely cased in a straight waistcoat, and lodged in proper hands, he hastened to make his enquiries after the lady, who had suffered so severely by the negligence of his people, who had let a creature so wild as Saunders escape out of their charge. Interest and humanity conjointly prompted him to pay this mark of respect and atonement to a person who was now become proprietor of the house and land he lived in. Sir Roger Manstock was accessible to every body, and of course Gordon was admitted: from him he received the whole melancholy detail of Saunders's case, and the providential rescue of his beloved Isabella from the clutches of a raving maniac, inflamed with revenge against the sex, and probably bent both upon violation and murder. What were his obligations then to the courage and vigour

gour of her defender, when he heard, with horror thrilling through his veins, this awful narrative of the danger she had been snatched from! His heart ran over with gratitude to Heaven, and acknowledgments to Henry.

No sooner was Gordon departed, than Sir Roger sent a summons to our hero, determined to discharge himself in some degree of the weight of obligations which pressed upon his mind, by an instant acknowledgment of him as the son of his niece, and every offer of an unreserved friendship in future.—"If then he demands my daughter," he said within himself, "can I refuse him the possession of what he has preserved? Could I hold out against a claim so just, and drive him who has given her life a second time, into the like condition with that wretched maniac?"—Whilst these reflections occupied his mind, the servant he had sent for Henry, made report that he was not to be found, and indeed as he had not ventured upon an intrusion into Isabella's apartment, it is not to be wondered at that his search was fruitless. Here his presence was still indispensable, for nothing but the cheering sight of her defender, and his persuasive voice, could yet allay the tumult of her mind. Constitutions less strong than Isabella's might have sunk entirely under such a shock; the ravage it made in her nerves was not inconsiderable, and great attention was necessary to prevent further derangement. Zachary, whose services were now in demand, of course postponed his journey, and paid close attendance upon his lovely patient. Silence and repose were the great and only restoratives in request; with this view a couch was provided in her dressing room, and on this was displayed the fairest form in creation, whilst at her side, in pensive mute attention to each breath she drew, sat Henry, whilst

a servant, posted without the chamber-door, kept watch against disturbers of her slumbers. And now the gentle power of sleep had visited her senses, descending like the dove of peace with downy pinions on her troubled spirit; one glimmering ray of evening light scarcely sufficed to shadow out her form, and on this the eyes of Henry invariably were fixt, whilst he held her hand fast locked in his, careful to prevent the slightest movement, if it were possible, even of a fibre to awaken her.

In the mean time, the news had reached Doctor Sandford, who, in company with his son, instantly resorted to Hagley House: even Delapoor himself, in the adjoining village, had received the alarming intelligence, magnified as usual in its passage, and he had also joined the anxious groupe of visitors to Sir Roger. Whilst strict order of silence was observed through all that region of the house, which was dedicated to Isabella, this groupe of friends waited the issue of her present repose with anxious hope, and Henry's praises were in the mean time the general topic of their discourse: even the modest diffidence of young Sandford was overcome by the warmth of their applauses, and he gave his voice to the chorus with peculiar glee; for he loved our young hero, and was beloved by him; he also, at humble distance, adored his lovely patroness, whose grace of giving had the power of doubling every bounty she bestowed, and Sandford's was the very heart to feel that grace in its full compass and extent.

Honest Zachary also joined the company; he communicated to them with cordial delight the favourable situation of his patient above stairs, wrapt in soft repose and guarded by the preserver
of

of her life. He then expatiated very learnedly upon the dismal effects of sudden frights and perturbations, with the different modes of treating them, arguing with great display of reason, that no one process was so efficacious as the soothing attention of some affectionate person best beloved by the suffering object. In the course of this discussion, the learned lecturer got himself so completely entangled amongst the fibrous ramifications of the nervous system, that after many fruitless struggles, and as many plunges into deeper difficulties, Zachary left nothing clear to the edification of his hearers, except that love was one of the strongest of the human passions, that the person best beloved was decidedly the most welcome to the person loving; that sleep was a grand restorer of exhausted nature; and finally, that it was his opinion, the young lady up stairs would sleep the better for Henry's sitting by her, and of course that his society would forward her recovery. To all these conclusions, there was not amongst the company present one single opponent, though Sir Roger, whilst he acquiesced in these general deductions, chose to make use of the word gratitude on the part of his daughter, in place of the broader, and, perhaps, more apposite term which Zachary, had employed on the same subject.

There was indeed one person in company, whom long experience of the fatal power of love, deep sensibility of its effects, and sufficient eloquence to have descanted on that topic, qualified to speak what would have been worth the attention of the hearers, had he been so disposed; but silence and sorrow seemed to have entire possession of poor Delapoer; still one ray of hope cheered the gloom of his ideas, and that was derived from the prospect

pect now given him, by the declared attachment of Isabella to his son.

Doctor Sandford observed to Zachary with a smile, that he did not wonder if he had found some difficulty, in treating upon love, to preserve a due distinction of ideas, since it was an affection that shewed itself under so many symptoms and descriptions, being in some cases an actual disease, in others an effectual remedy. The medicines commonly applied for the cure of it, were too often ignorantly administered, and few fathers, he believed, were good physicians in their own families. "Very true," cried Zachary, "they deal too much in strong repellants." A deep sigh which escaped from Delapoer, not unperceived by the company, reminded them they were touching upon too tender a subject, and at this moment, to their general joy, Henry entered with a chearful air, announcing the good news of Isabella's amendment; she had waked from sleep so recovered and composed, that he hoped all effects from her fright would now be done away—"Hold, hold," cried Zachary interrupting him, "young physicians are apt to be too sanguine; old ones proceed with caution: we must not pronounce upon the cure as perfect, because the symptoms intermit."—Sir Roger submitted to this doctrine, and though impatient to see his daughter, suffered Zachary to visit her without him.

Delapoer now saw a fair opportunity of sounding the parties present, with regard to his wish of inhabiting the parsonage devolved upon young Sandford; he expressed his intention, with leave of the incumbent, to purchase the furniture and effects of the late Mr. Ratcliffe, reserving an apartment to the use of the said Mr. Sandford, assuring him that whatever he laid out, either in that or any other

other way upon the premisses, should remain to his use and benefit; and as his life would be retired and single for the rest of his days, there would not fail to be house enough for them both, whilst circumstances remained as they were at present. —“ My motives,” said he, “ for wishing to end my days in this spot of earth which covers all that was dear and valuable to me in life, are known to Sir Roger Manstock, and I believe I may add, that any promises I engage for with Mr. Sandford, will be guaranteed by this young gentleman now sitting beside me, who, by deed of gift, is heir irrevocable of all that I am worth. To the head of my house, who, with the title, inherits every thing that appertains to it, I shall bequeath to the full amount of what I have received, my sword and my honour, both untainted and no worse for the wear. Of my great and early disappointment in life I will not speak, for the author of it is gone to his account, and the object of it, alas! is now no more. One wish remains at my heart, which if I am indulged in, I shall pray for so much life as may suffice for the completion of it; if it is refused to me, death cannot come too suddenly. This I will now explain before the present company, hoping they will second my most earnest suit to Sir Roger Manstock; it is, that I may be permitted to raise some monument of affection and respect, to the memory of that beloved person whom we have lately followed to the grave. I would have it a mausoleum separate and select, and in some degree resembling certain edifices of that description, which I have contemplated with awful veneration in the east. I have marked in my walks about this place, a location, as I think, peculiarly apposite; and I have worked upon a plan, (for architecture

chitecture has been my favourite study) which I shall be prepared to exhibit to Sir Roger Manstock, when I have his permission for so doing. The workmen and materials are within my reach, the superintendence of the work will be my task, the last melancholy gratification that my sorrows will admit of."

A request so new and unexpected coming upon the worthy Baronet in this manner, embarrassed him not a little; he was at no time very quick at a reply, but now was more than ordinarily deliberate in arranging his thoughts. Indeed a suspicion had haunted him ever since his last conversation with Delapoer, that grief and disappointment had in some degree deranged his intellects, and this proposal of the mausoleum very much confirmed him in that notion; he therefore sought rather to evade the suit than to satisfy it, observing to him, that the manners of the East were different from those of Europe; that in some few instances edifices of the sort he described had been erected in certain parts of England, but with an effect that did not much recommend them to his taste; a monument attached to a church he had no objection to, it had a local solemnity, and was seldom visited by the observer but at religious seasons, whereas a mausoleum built upon unconsecrated ground became, like other ornamental buildings in parks and gardens, a mere spectacle to the curious, and was rarely found to impress the visitor with any portion of that mournful respect, with which the founder of it might be supposed to have been inspired. Besides this, it was to be considered, that Lord Crowbery was still living; and though his insensibility towards the deceased had been such as to devolve upon her kindred those duties and decent attentions towards her remains which

which properly belonged to himself, yet this would be an affront that could not fail to provoke his utmost rancour, and expose her memory to the worst insinuations. Upon the whole, he thought it a matter of no small moment, and therefore should not wish to decide upon it hastily. As for Mr. Sandford's parsonage house, it was a question entirely for the parties concerned to settle between themselves, he could have no objection to oppose to a tender of so generous a sort.

The project of the mausoleum being thus adjourned, Delapoer retired with Doctor Sandford and his son, to negotiate the treaty for the parsonage, when Sir Roger, finding himself left with Henry, addressed him as follows:—

“The service you have this day rendered me is of such magnitude, as no return of thanks on my part can sufficiently express, since there is no object in this world so precious to me as the life, which, under Providence, you have been the means of saving. You cannot therefore tax my gratitude above the value which I put upon your merits, and of course, I must refer it to your own choice and arbitration, to name that favour within my power to grant, which will make you happy to obtain, if any such there is: consult your wishes, Henry, and let me know what it is I can do to recompence the preserver of my daughter.”

“The first and greatest favour you can bestow upon me,” replied Henry, “is the assurance of your pardon for the seeming duplicity of my conduct, in keeping secret the affinity I have the honour to bear to you, and the presumptuous love that I have harboured in my heart for your adorable daughter. Obedience to the injunctions of a tender parent, compelled me to silence in the first case, and nature over-ruled the consciousness of my

my own unworthiness in the latter; for how cou'd I approach Miss Manstock, and be insensible to her perfections? how cou'd I see her and converse with her without surrendering myself up to love and admiration?"

"If my pardon," said Sir Roger, "be all you have to ask, you wou'd indeed name a very slight return for a very weighty obligation: but let us talk in plainer terms; by pardon, I presume you mean consent and approbation; when you desire me to pardon you for loving my daughter, I suppose I am to understand it as a modest way of asking me to give you my daughter."

Henry blushed and was silent.—"Why, truly," resumed the Baronet, "your diffidence makes a stop without discovering an excuse for it, for whilst you scruple to demand my daughter, you do not hesitate to secure her affections."—"If such is my happy fortune, replied Henry, "the interest I may have with her is all the merit I can claim with you: to her then I refer my cause, in her is all my hope."

Here a message, from Isabella to her father called him suddenly away, and cut short a conference that was becoming very critically interesting to our agitated hero.

CHAPTER III.

Love is the grand Specific.

WHILST Sir Roger Manstock attended the summons of his beloved daughter, Delapoor had brought his business to a conclusion with the Sandfords, and had set out on his return to the parsonage;

parsonage; damped and deprest in spirit by the chilling reception he had met with from Sir Roger, in the matter of his projected mausoleum, he turned in his thoughts every mode his imagination could suggest for combating the objections he had heard, and as appearances towards the noble but unworthy widower, seemed the strongest and best founded bars to his proposal, he brought himself, after long debate and meditation, to the romantic resolution of setting out forthwith upon a secret expedition to Crowbery Castle, there to demand an interview with the Viscount, and either by reasoning or other means, if reasoning would not serve, to return with such authority for commencing his operations, as should satisfy the delicacy of Sir Roger Manstock with respect to opposition from that quarter. Thus determined, he put himself in order of march with all possible dispatch, and taking with him a faithful servant in his post-chaise, left a note for Henry, simply informing him that he should be absent for a few days upon particular business, which he would explain to him at his return.

In the mean time Sir Roger visited his lovely daughter, and had the happiness to find her in a state of such convalescence as promised him a speedy and complete recovery. His conversation with her was tender and gratifying in the extreme, for he talked of Henry in terms of the highest approbation, acknowledging his obligations to him with a warmth of gratitude and affection, that encouraged her to throw off all reserve in speaking of her attachment. To this, in the same strain of candour, he replied, that he had seen enough to certify the fact, which she confessed to, and therefore any attempt to vary from it would be highly disingenuous. It was natural, he owned, that she should

should be thus partial to a man so amiable in mind and person, and what must that heart be, he said, which was not sensible of obligations so important as those she owed to Henry? Far be it then from him to oppose her inclinations: with two such melancholy instances freshly impressed upon his mind, he should not risk the fatal consequences of exerting his parental authority to prevent her union with the man of her heart, so long as nothing could be urged to the impeachment of his character. But as time, which was both the friend of prudence and the test of truth, must now of necessity intervene before their connection could take place, he flattered himself, that in decency to the deceased, neither Henry nor herself would take means to shorten it by any abrupt determination: let the season of mourning run out its full date, during which he should impose no illiberal restraint upon either of them, no less confiding in Henry's honour than in her discretion.—“My doors,” he added, will never be shut against the preserver of my Isabella, till I see, what I hope and trust will never occur, sufficient reasons for so harsh a measure.”

To this Isabella made answer, that her recollection did not serve as to all that had passed, but she well remembered, in the midst of her terrors, clinging to the breast of her defender. “In his arms I sought for safety, and I found it; in that terrible moment, the impression of whose horrors will never be effac'd from my memory, he opposed himself to the raging phrensy of my assailant, and snatched me from a fate too terrible to think of. Even now my imagination is haunted by visions, which nothing but his presence can dispel; when he is absent darkness falls upon my senses, with
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his appearance light returns; and shou'd he leave us, I shall never know happiness or health again."

The agitation which accompanied these words so alarmed her father, that he beseeched her to entertain no such desponding thoughts, but assure herself that Henry would continue where he was till she was in a state to travel, and should attend her even to Manstock House, if she wished it. With these assurances she seemed pacified, and Sir Roger, willing to prevent any further irritation, took the opportunity of Zachary's coming into the room quietly to slip out of it, and retire in good time. Zachary soon perceived that her spirits had been disturbed, and wished to prescribe something in his own way to allay them, advising her at the same time to solicit sleep, and exclude all company from her chamber.—"Ah! my good Sir," she cried, "how widely you mistake my case: solitude is my terror; I know not when I shall be able to encounter it; I have a horrid image continually before my eyes, and no one but he, who rescued me from the reality, can fortify me against the shadow. Till I am satisfied that Henry is in the House, and that he will not leave it, I can never rest."—Zachary assured her that he was in the house, and would have been ere now at the side of her couch if he had not in the most peremptory manner protested against it.—"It is not to be told," he added, "what difficulty I had to persuade him to stay away from you."—"I hope then she replied, "you will for my sake, as well as your own, never attempt that difficulty any more: why shou'd I resort to art, when nature tenders me a ready cure? What I may be brought to in time I know not, but I have not yet lost my senses, and therefore dark rooms and soporific doses do not apply to my case."

Whilst she was yet speaking, the room door was gently opened, and a ray of light from one glimmering taper striking on the person of Henry, presented an object to her sight worth all the recipes on Zachary's file. The Doctor saw the change that instantly took place in the countenance of his patient; joy now illuminated her lovely features, the blood once more glowed in her cheeks, and Zachary exclaimed—"Well, my fair Lady, if such cures can be performed without the Doctor's help, 'tis time for me to leave off the profession; I shall begin to think that physie is mere quackery, and a dose of what the heart loves best worth all the compounds in the chymist's shop."—This said, he retired, whilst Henry approached with cautious steps to the lovely convalescent, gently taking her hand, which was held out to him, whilst she said—"Don't be any longer alarmed about me, I shall soon recover all the unpleasant effects of this day's misadventure, and remember none but such as gratitude to my preserver have implanted in my heart for ever. Oh! Henry, sure it was my guardian angel brought you to my rescue at that dreadful moment, and endowed you with nerves to combat a creature, whose phrenzy seemed to furnish him with supernatural strength. How lost beyond redemption I had been but for you! Surely you will not leave me in this dismal place, where I can look on nothing but what revives the scene of my terrors: surely you will return with us to Manstock; it is my father's wish; 'tis my request: what says my Henry?"

To this tender petition Henry replied with equal tenderness, that he was her's, his whole heart was devoted to her, and that he was prepared to obey every wish of her's, though it should impose upon him the severest trial, and, not like the present one,

one, flatter him with a prospect of the highest happiness he could receive, that of being allowed to attend upon her in whose presence only he could be said to live. Whilst he repeated this he gently pressed her hand, which he still held to his breast, fondly regarding her with a look of softest pity and affection; a sympathetic glow of chaste delight beamed on her blushing face, her eyes witnessed the animating pleasure which these endearments gave her; and when she saw him watchful of her emotions, and preparing as she thought to withdraw himself through fear of discomposing her tranquillity, she smiled, and said—"I perceive you have been tutor'd by our Doctor; Zachary has persuaded you that you ought not to be here; but he is no physician for the mind; and you, (Oh Henry! why shou'd I blush to own it!) you are the master of those springs which feed my heart with life and health; at your touch they move; in your presence I revive; when you absent yourself, they stop and relapse into despair."

Whilst she was uttering this, Henry was struggling to repress his transports; with difficulty he refrained from throwing himself at her feet; but recollecting in the instant all the danger of her situation, he checked the ardour of his passion, and with as much composure as he could summon on the sudden, reassured her of his inviolable attachment, promising to be ever ready at her call, attentive to all her wishes, and resolute to devote his whole life to her service.—"Only be composed," he cried, "let me but see this gentle bosom resume its peace, and all these tremors vanish, who then will be so blest as I?"—"I perceive," she replied, "that you regard me with pity, as a being deprived of reason, and one who, according to Zachary's regimen, should be kept in solitude and

silence; it may be so, I am sensible I wander in my thoughts beyond the bounds of reason or discretion, for gratitude perhaps betrays me into too much warmth of language, and sensibility in the excess resembles madness; if so, I must submit, and you must treat me as my malady requires; still I will hope that your compassion sometimes will prevail with you to visit me in my affliction, and if you find that by your process my disorder is aggravated, not relieved, perhaps you then will think it time to try what contraries may do, and favour me with more indulgencies."

A deep drawn sigh, accompanied by tears, succeeded to this speech; her head sunk upon her breast, and she seemed surrendering herself up to an agony of grief, when Henry, no longer master of himself, and cut to the heart with her construction of his reserve, cast himself on his knees, and enfolding her in his arms, gave vent to all those fond and ardent protestations, which with difficulty he had hitherto suppressed: the act and the effect, like those of electricity, were instantaneous; so quick she caught the sympathy of his transports, it seemed as if one soul had animated both, the gloom that hung upon her spirits vanished in a moment, her mind became collected, and joy diffused smiles over her beauteous countenance. Such was the magical transmutation love wrought in the mind and person of our fair heroine! To follow them in their conversation any further is a task we shall not undertake; the language of lovers is apt to be too broken and desultory for regular detail, and their imaginations a little too volatile for sober history; there is also more of action in these scenes than can well be brought into description, and if attempted to be described, are they not open to misconstruction, which might wound the purity so characteris-

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tic of those persons, for whose honour we are truly zealous? Let it suffice to say, that though love reigned in both their hearts, honour kept guard over one, and innocence was inherent in the other; respect tempered the passion of Henry, virtue herself might have acknowledged the sensations of Isabella.

CHAPTER IV.

Rash enterprizes are apt to miscarry.

WHILST Henry and Isabella were thus enjoying the blessings of a virtuous mutual passion, Delapoer, the melancholy martyr of an unfortunate attachment, like a wounded veteran worn out in the service of an ungrateful master, was pursuing his pensive progress towards the habitation of the Viscount. Deep and dreary were his meditations by the way, and not one word escaped him to the humble companion of his journey: his mind continually pondered upon the object of his expedition, and various were the speeches he compounded and decompounded for the event of their meeting. In all these resentment was a prevalent ingredient, and the bitter drug of an inveterate aversion to the worthless possessor of his lost and lamented treasure, tainted every composition he devised. Nature had given him, together with a fair and comely person, a most kind and courteous disposition, but the cruel stings of disappointed love had festered in his bosom, whilst his travels and campaigns in an unhealthy climate had hastened on a premature old age, and rendered him feeble
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and decrepid at a time of life when many others enjoy themselves in full health and vigour of constitution. We have already stated the condition he was found in on board the prize by Henry, and his rescue from that dangerous crisis: grief for the loss of Lady Crowbery had since preyed upon him in such a manner, as not only to reduce his feeble constitution in an alarming degree, but in some measure to impair his mental faculties, of which this chimera of the mausoleum, and the journey he was taking in consequence of it, were no slight symptoms: his thoughts, by dwelling perpetually upon one single object, rendered him strange and insensible to all other matters, and withal so vehement and pertinacious in the pursuit of his favourite meditation, that neither rest, nor food, nor the calls of health, could awaken his attention; and in spite of all the remonstrances of his faithful servant, he pressed forward on his journey, though he was evidently sinking under fatigue, and at the same time exhibited strong symptoms of a fever hastily coming on.

These indications were no longer dubious at the conclusion of his journey, and as his chaise entered the village of Crowbery, the delirium had gained upon him to such a degree, that he was no longer capable of giving orders to the drivers where to go, much less of executing the purposes of his expedition. The reader may recollect a certain public house on the village green, under the sign of the George and Dragon; this being the only house of entertainment in the place, thither the drivers conducted our travellers, and there they stopt. It so chanced that Ezekiel Daw was at this instant perambulating the aforesaid green, enjoying the fresh breeze of the evening, and his customary pipe, when curiosity led him to the alehouse door

door to enquire who the strangers might be ; and probably the idea that his friend Henry would be found in the chaise had a share in that curiosity, for sure enough the thoughts of that good creature were at that very time employed in meditating upon our hero, whose absence his kind heart very seriously regretted.

Delapoer was still in the chaise, and Martin his servant in great distress how to dispose of him, when Ezekiel coming up to the door, discovered the person of the reputed Mr. Smith, and no sooner heard, and indeed saw, the sad state he was in, than with the compassion natural to him, he claimed acquaintance with the wretched invalid, and immediately directed the drivers to conduct him to the house of Susan May, where he promised him a kind reception, and all possible care and attention proper for his situation. This was gladly accepted by Martin on the part of his master, and executed without delay. Ezekiel strode across the green with such speed, that he was at Susan's door, and had warned her of what was coming, before the carriage got round and drove up to the gate. Benevolence, that glowed in Ezekiel's bosom, was no less warm in those of Susan and her mother ; at the call of pity both parties turned out upon the instant, and as the chaise stopt, both with the same hospitable voice welcomed the arrival of their distressed and sickly guest. Whilst the women prepared a bed for him, Martin and Ezekiel lifted him out of the chaise, and with the aid of a proper cordial from the store-closet of Dame May, saved him from a fainting fit.

As soon as they had got him into bed, and provided all things necessary for his comfort and accommodation, Ezekiel advanced to the bed side, and having felt his pulse with due solemnity and deliberation,

deliberation, drew Martin aside, and in a low voice said—"Of a truth, friend, I discover very ugly tokens of a febrile quality in the pulse of this poor gentleman, to whom I presume you stand in near degree of friendship or affinity, seeing you have exhibited proofs of so much care and solicitude about his person."—Martin replied, that he was the gentleman's servant, but no less attached to him than if he had the honour of being his relation.—"Be it so! be it so!" quoth Ezekiel, "there is honour due unto all men, who fulfil the duties of the station they are in, however humble it may be; and I perceive thou art not one that contenteth himself with eye-service only, as some are too apt to render. Let that pass therefore, and to the point, which being no less important than that of the life or death of a fellow-creature, demandeth brevity and quick dispatch. I have myself a smattering in the medical art (I speak humbly as becometh me) having been early train'd to wield the pestle, and compound the drugs of a country practitioner of no mean note; but I presume not to undertake a case of such danger and difficulty, as I much fear this will be attended with; at the same time I know not whither to resort for better advice in this pressing emergency; for the *Æsculapius* of our parish is absent at this present, and the substitute, who officiates in his stead, Alexander Kinloch by name, warrants not any great eulogium from me, seeing I cannot witness to the success of his practice in general; in candour I wou'd say more, if in conscience I was not check'd from uttering an untruth; had Alexander Kinloch been a cobbler or a butcher, I wou'd perhaps strain a point to recommend a neighbour, but in the skill of the physician depends the safety of the patient, and therefore it is that I speak not in

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his praise ; to be short, he is a very self-conceited shallow fellow, wilful as a mule, and ignorant as an ass, and woe betide the sick that comes under his care ; where he enters, death is at the door !”

“ What then is to become of my poor master,” replied Martin, “ if this is all he is to look to ? Have you no physician within reach ?”—“ We have had Doctors in the neighbourhood,” said Ezekiel, “ but our country is so healthful, that it has starv’d them all out : in fact, there is little or no employ for any but bone-setters and man-midwives. Therefore, if I may advise, we will let nature have her course for this night, which with good nursing, and the attention of these kind women, we may hope will pass well with our patient, and to-morrow we will consult what more may be done for Mr. Smith’s relief and accommodation.”—“ Smith, did you say ?” demanded Martin, “ my master’s name is Delapoer, the Honourable Henry Delapoer, son of the late Lord Pendennis, and brother to the present ; a gentleman of noble family and great fortune, acquir’d with high reputation and long services in the East Indies.”—“ Say you so ! say you so !” interposed Ezekiel.—“ And be assur’d,” added Martin, “ he is not a man to let these your kind offices go unrewarded, if he lives to come to a sense of them : my master (Heaven preserve him !) is of a noble spirit, and lets nobody serve him for nothing.”—“ What tell you me of his spirit,” cried the preacher, drawing himself up into the stiffest of all human attitudes ; “ there be others, who have as much spirit as your master, and who will not allow of any recompence to be made for the common offices of hospitality and humanity, which they have both the mind and the means to deal to those who stand in need of their assistance ; but I

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excuse these sentiments in you, which, had they been sooner made known to me, I shou'd not have mistaken your condition as I did."—Here Martin finding he had roused the pride of his host, began to make apologies; which he had no sooner done, than the spirit of the good creature was instantly allayed, and with many friendly expressions, and a hearty shake by the hand, he assured him every idea of offence was totally done away; and as he felt, perhaps, that more resentment had been shewn than the occasion warranted, he set about to qualify appearances, by telling Martin that there was not a man in the kingdom less irritable or captious than himself; every body that knew him could witness that his patience and forbearance were notorious to a proverb, so long as his motives were rightly understood; but as to them, he presumed every well-meaning man was naturally and laudably sensitive; for to do eye-service to God, and take wages of Mammon, was to make a stalking-horse of religion, and in his opinion, a most heinous and despicable piece of hypocrisy.

Ezekiel Daw had now sufficiently developed his own character for Martin no longer to mistake it, so that having heard this harangue without returning any answer, peace was effectually re-established, and the features of the apostle relaxed from their rigidity. He then proceeded to enquire what friends or relations Mr. Delapoe might have in those parts, whom it might be proper to apprise of his situation; or if none such were at hand, what particular call he might have to the village of Crowbery, which caused him to travel with such speed and perseverance, to the sensible neglect of his health. To this Martin replied, that he concluded it was business of no small importance, which brought his master to that place; but the particular

particular nature of it he was not informed of; however, he understood so much from what had escaped him by the way, as to believe it had reference to the Lord Crowbery in person, with whom his master seemed very eager to have an interview.——“Enough said,” quoth Ezekiel; “his business lieth with the Lord Viscount at the castle, and his speed betokeneth the momentous nature of that business: I do recognize his person heretofore in these parts, when he pass’d himself upon me under the name of Smith: there is a mystery at the bottom, that I am not curious to pry into: nevertheless, friend, it seemeth right unto me, that the Lord Viscount should be apprised of his arrival, and also of the malady, with which it hath pleased God to visit him, that so the aforesaid Lord Viscount may aid and assist us in this extremity with his counsel, and thereby lighten our responsibility in case your master should die, which truly I do greatly fear will be the case.”

Having so said, and no opposition being made on the part of Martin, Ezekiel stalked away, and with hasty strides bent his course towards the castle.

CHAPTER. V.

Bellum, Pax rursum.

THE party we left at the castle, consisting of Claypole and his niece, with the Lord of the mansion, had passed their time in their accustomed retirement, and received no addition to their number from the curiosity or civility of their neighbours

neighbours, for the unsocial qualities of the Viscount were well known to all the gentry round about him, and none of them loved or respected him sufficiently to pay him an uninvited visit. Amongst the various causes in nature, which tend to corroborate or impair an attachment, we are not curious to search for that particular motive which had operated to the evident abatement of his Lordship's passion for Miss Fanny, but so it was, that his ardour had considerably cooled of late, so as to excite some uneasy sensations in the mind of the sagacious uncle, and at certain times emotions of indignation and resentment in the tender bosom even of the lady herself. Perhaps it would have been prudent in this fair creature, whose personal charms were her chief, if not her only, recommendation, to have husbanded that resource with a little more œconomy; but as her uncle had on his part been as prodigal of advice, as she had been of favours, it may be presumed he overacted his part, so as to force her into measures directly contrary to what he recommended. Certain it is, that she did not love the Lord Crowbery, and therefore we may conclude some passion stood proxy for inclination in her connection with that personage; whatever this was, she followed it as a guide to matrimony, though by so doing she very much dissented from her uncle's policy, who frequently objected to her in the vulgar phrase of the common saying, that she had put the cart before the horse.

It so happened, that whilst Ezekiel was on his way to the castle, meditating as he walked on the address with which he purposed to introduce himself and his business to the noble Viscount, a tête-à-tête between his Lordship and Miss Fanny had taken place, in which some little asperity had mixed
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ed with matters of a sweeter quality, that young lady having taken occasion to enquire of his Lordship, what precise time he had fixed for making good his promises, by presenting her with a coronet, hinting in modest terms, that this was reasonably to be looked for before she returned the favour, by presenting him with an heir. Amongst various excuses which the Peer had ready at hand to palliate his delay, the recent death of his lady was insisted on in a manner that provoked Miss Fanny to advance a few truths upon the meanness of hypocrisy; after so public a breach, she observed, between him and Lady Crowbery, the world could not expect even the semblance of sorrow on his part; that if he had meant to treat her memory with respect, how came it to pass that he failed to shew it to her remains, but consigned them to her uncle for burial? She could not therefore regard his plea of her recent death in any other light than as a palpable pretence to evade an act of honour and justice, which it would be more manly in him to disavow at once, and boldly face the consequences of his breach of faith, than meanly fritter away both her time and patience with apologies and excuses that were as frivolous as they were false. And what was this Lady Crowbery, for whom he held himself thus bound to sacrifice to appearances? Upon what terms did they live? In what temper did they part? Did he stir one foot from his door to accompany her on her way, when she departed from his house a dying woman? Had he any love, or respect, or even pity in his heart towards her, then was the time to shew it; but it was notorious he had not; and it was also as well known who had; it was no secret to her at least, that Henry the adventurer was the object of her fondest affection; that he embarked

embarked on board Captain Cary's ship for no other purpose but to give her the meeting at Lisbon; that when that undertaking failed, and illness stop'd her short at Falmouth, there he joined her, there he renewed those uninterrupted attentions, which cheered her dying moments, and in his arms she fondly breathed out her last expiring sigh.——“Damnation! Madam,” he exclaimed, “do you think I have no feelings, that you sport with them so unmercifully? Do you think I have no sense of honour, of revenge? Can you suppose that villain shall escape my vengeance? And is this a time to talk of marriage?”——“Say, rather,” she replied, “is this a wife to mourn for? As for revenging yourself upon her favourite, if that be your serious pursuit, no fear but you will find it; Henry is not a man to avoid an open enemy; if your Lordship has the spirit, he will give you the opportunity.”——“’Sblood; Madam, do you doubt my spirit?”——“Till I have better proof of your honour, I do doubt your spirit; but as I am persuaded Henry will soon return to these parts, your Lordship may soon put that matter out of question, though I shou’d rather think your first discussion ought to be with your Lady’s first love, Mr. Delapoe, who I understand to be returned to England, fraught with the treasures of the East, and loud in his invectives against you.”

“Against me,” cried the Peer, sensibly alarmed: “what has Mr. Delapoe to do with me? Because he thought fit to run away with her before marriage, am I to be call’d to account by him after her death? If I am to fight my way through all her lovers, I had need have more lives than one for the undertaking. By the alacrity you express in numbering up my opponents, I shou’d almost suspect you took pleasure in my danger.”——

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To this she calmly replied, "I only warn you of your danger, my Lord, which is the office of a friend, and trusting to your courage, take an early opportunity of putting you upon your guard. I have a correspondent who has inform'd me of some particulars that perhaps you are unappris'd of; I am told that Mr. Delapoe had a meeting with your Lady at Falmouth, and that he paid the closest and fondest attendance upon her in her last illness; I hear also that he was present at her funeral, and remains inconsolable for her death; I further understand, that he speaks of you with less respect than any man of spirit will permit his character to be spoken of; in short, my Lord, I shou'd not wonder if a man, whose blood is fir'd with the heats of India, and who avowedly imputes to you the death of the object so dearly lov'd, and so deeply lamented, shall be found capable of any measures, how violent soever, or how rash: nay, truly it wou'd not much surprise me to hear his name announc'd to you this very evening, as my servant tells me there has been a chaise and four post-horses arriv'd in the village not an hour ago, and that the travellers were receiv'd into the house of Susan May, which, in your late friend Blachford's time, wou'd hardly have been open'd to visitors at that hour, and of that description."—Whilst Miss Fanny was thus speaking the visage of Lord Crowbery became ruefully aghast; he struggled for words, but passion and pride stopt what fear and cowardice would have dictated. At last, after many efforts and much ridiculous gesticulation, he made shift to mutter out a few broken sentences, by which nothing was to be understood, but that he believed she was in a league with those assassins to attempt his life. With a smile of ineffable contempt, she replied,

replied, "I am not in any league against your life, for I am injur'd, I know how to redress myself against the villain who betrays my confidence and violates those promises he has employ'd to seduce my virtue. Let such a faithless wretch tremble at my vengeance; defenceless as I may seem to be, I have a spirit that will not stoop to infamy, and a hand that can execute the merited punishment on the defiler of my virgin honour."

This ranting menace, uttered with all the emphasis of a tragedy-heroine, might have lost its effect at any other time than the present, when his Lordship's nerves were very much deranged from various causes; but now it was heard with terror; and when she rose from her seat with becoming dignity to make her exit, the spiritless and quivering lover earnestly requested her not to leave him in anger, for that he was ready to obey her wishes, and give her every possible proof of his love, honour, and good faith. This atonement made her features soften into kindness, and whilst she tendered him her hand in token of forgiveness, she declared herself ready to stand by him in all difficulties and dangers, and make common cause against every impertinent that should offer to annoy him.

CHAPTER. VI.

An humble Visitor meets a haughty Reception.

THE terms that fear extorts, cunning commonly finds means to evade. Lord Crowbery had all the disposition in life to extricate himself from his embarrassments with Miss Fanny, and

and all the regret that heart could feel for having rashly involved himself in them. The peace he had patched up was of course a dubious one, but at the present moment it was convenient.

A servant now entered the room, and reported to his Lord, that Ezekiel Daw was in waiting, and requested to be admitted upon business of importance. It was one of those ill-timed strokes that take a man in the moment of his weakness. My Lord might certainly have refused admission to a poor neighbour of Daw's condition, but Miss Fanny had instantly given her voice in the affirmative, and for him to revoke it was to subject himself to greater inconveniencies than his confirming it might lead to. It is probable that the idea of Delapoeer rushed upon his mind, when he heard the name of Ezekiel Daw; but a thousand other trifling matters might occur to bring that good apostle to his door, who was ever busy in the interests of his poor neighbours, and forward to stand forth as their advocate with the rich and mighty. Having therefore put the previous question of "What does the fellow want with me?" and received for answer from the servant, that Daw would not communicate his business; the cautious Peer directed his message first to Mr. Claypole, desiring the favour of his attendance, and then permitted him to tell Ezekiel that he would see him for a few moments. In consequence of these orders, the Reverend Mr. Claypole, and the untitled field-preacher entered the audience-chamber, where sat the lord of the castle and his lady elect, nearly at the same moment.

Ezekiel made his reverence, and was told to deliver himself of his business in as few words as possible. "I doubt not," replied the preacher, "that time is precious to your Lordship, who so well

well knows the uses of it; and I shall therefore intrude no further on your patience, than a brief recital of my motives for soliciting the honour of this audience will of necessity involve. Benevolence, my Lord, as this Reverend Divine can testify, is a virtue which——”——“ We do not wish to hear you expatiate upon,” said Claypole, interrupting him; “ let brevity for once be your virtue, Ezekiel Daw, or patience will not be our’s, and you will be dismiss’d without a hearing.”——“ Reverend Sir,” replied Ezekiel, “ I will be brief, and not put any virtue of your’s to a trial, that might perchance be too hard for it. This is my business—A traveller hath this evening arriv’d in our village, who now sojourneth at the house of Susannah May, of whose coming I held it as my duty to advertise the Lord Viscount Crowbery.”——“ And what is that to me? cried the Peer sensibly alarmed.—“ My Lord,” replied Daw, “ I humbly conceive it is so far forth appertaining to you, forasmuch as the gentleman, whose name is Delapoer, a person as it seemeth of high birth and noble family, incontinently seeketh your Lordship, upon business peradventure of no slight importance, seeing he hath travell’d with unremitting speed, to the great detriment of his health, and at the imminent-peril of his life; which, if I have any skill in prognostics, now draweth fast to a conclusion.”

At the name of Delapoer my Lord turned pale, and was visibly in great perturbation: the information with which Ezekiel concluded his speech, was of a more welcome sort. Rallying his spirits, he assumed a haughty tone, and demanded of the preacher, if he knew the nature of the business that Delapoer pretended to have with him. To this it was replied, that he knew it not, nor

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was the poor gentleman himself in a condition to make it known, having arrived in a high state of fever, which had seized his brain, and deprived him of his senses.—“ And where are your senses,” said Claypole, who knew enough of Delapoer’s story to unravel the whole mystery, “ to come on such an errand? What has my Lord Crowbery to do with Mr. Delapoer and his delirium? Let Kinloch, or Dame May, or any other old woman of the place (yourself for instance) put a blister on his head, or nurse your patient after any other fashion you think fit; we have neither doctors, surgeons, nor apothecaries in this family: I am astonish’d you have the assurance to intrude yourself upon his Lordship and the company present with such a tale.”—“ If I am guilty of an indecorum in coming hither,” said Ezekiel, “ I should expect your Reverence wou’d be the first to find pardon for my error, seeing it can spring from none but Christian motives of benevolence and charity. The stranger, who now languishes on the bed of sickness, might draw comfort from the presence of a noble person, whom he has sought with such avidity, and that noble person (pardon the presumption with which I speak it in his hearing) might seize the joyful opportunity of succouring a fellow creature in the hour of distress.”

This said, and no answer given, Ezekiel made his humble obedience and retired. Claypole, who bore him an ancient grudge, did not spare him on the occasion, calling him an officious, canting, methodistical rascal. Miss Fanny, who saw her prediction verified so unexpectedly, kept her eyes upon the Peer, secretly enjoying his confusion, whilst he maintained a sullen silence, persuaded that the whole had been a plot of her devising, and more than ever determined to escape out of her hands:
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for this purpose, he soon retired to his library for meditation, where it occurred to him to write to his cousin Captain Crowbery, whose assistance he foresaw would be necessary to him on many accounts, and on whose courage and counsel he could firmly rely. A short letter, requiring his instant presence, being written and dispatched, he found his mind considerably more at ease; and to cover his designs, carried himself towards Miss Fanny and her uncle with more than ordinary cordiality and good-humour. Claypole, though a cunning man in the general, was so effectually blinded by this finesse, and by the report his niece made of the result of her last altercation with his Lordship, that he considered her as Viscountess elect, and his labours crowned with success. He commended her very highly for her spirit, and observed, that fear operated on her lover's nature as the more powerful passion of the two; but no matter for that, so long as the object was attained, he would not quarrel with the means. He hoped Delapoer was not absolutely in a dying state, but of that he was determined to satisfy himself very speedily, for he regarded him, under the present circumstances, as a very lucky instrument for quickening his Lordship's measures, which he should take the first fair opportunity of promoting, by suggesting a temporary secession from Crowbery, during which the knot might be secretly tied, and not only the appearances of precipitation avoided, but also the interview with Delapoer, that he seemed so much to dread: to these ideas Miss Fanny on her part very cordially assented.

When Ezekiel arrived at Susan May's, he had the satisfaction to hear that Mr. Williams, the surgeon, had surprised them with a visit, and was then in attendance upon the sick person. He had obtained

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obtained his discharge from his ship, and was now come, upon Zachary's invitation, to give him the meeting upon the spot, and adjust the preliminaries of their treaty for the shop and trade. Nothing could be more critically fortunate for poor Delapoe, than the arrival of this intelligent young man, who had already rendered him such services, and made himself so acceptable to his patient. As for Daw who esteemed Williams, and despised Kinloch, his joy was excessive; and it was with some difficulty Susan May prevented him from rushing into the sick man's room to tell him so. In the mean time, a bed was appropriated to Williams in her house, that he might be near at hand and within call at all hours, for he had already pronounced upon the case of his patient as extremely dangerous. His applications however had such effect, that before the night was past, Williams had the satisfaction to see a change of symptoms, that augured favourably, and was recognised by Delapoe, with marks of joyful surprise and satisfaction. The meeting between Williams and Ezekiel was very affectionate, nor did his friend Susan fail to give him a reception perfectly kind and cordial. When he stated to them the object of his coming, they were rejoiced to hear there was so fair a chance of his settling amongst them, to the exclusion of Kinloch; and in truth Williams was deservedly beloved by all that knew him, being a young man of most gentle and engaging manners, in person very agreeable, and of a well-informed understanding, with every thing that could recommend him in the line of his profession; at such times and seasons as his patient did not need his attendance he gave the whole detail of his adventures by land and sea, since he had quitted Crowbery; but in a more particular manner he recited every thing that had

had passed from the time that Henry had joined the frigate. This was the most interesting part of his story to Ezekiel and Susan, who listened with admiration and delight to the animated picture Williams drew of their heroic friend, and which he coloured to the height, with every warm tint that truth could give, or valour and humanity deserve. Whilst this was in relation, Ezekiel's glowing spirit would break forth into rapture and exultation; ever and anon he would spring from his seat, erect himself into a martial attitude, and thunder forth his applauses, forgetting sometimes his accustomed sobriety of speech, and launching forth into apostrophes of triumph, which, if they did not absolutely amount to a breach of the statute against swearing, were yet but hair-breadth escapes from the penal letter of the law. Susan's fine eyes meanwhile expressed the tenderest sensibility of soul, now dropping tears of sympathy, now glistening bright with transport, emotions that cannot be thought to have escaped the penetrating observation of the narrator.—"I knew," exclaimed Ezekiel, in one of his rhapsodies, "that my boy was brave. It was I, and I alone, who first discovered the innate integrity of his heart; albeit, he was then oppressed under a cloud of accusations and appearances of guilt: it was I, and I alone, who stepped forth in the defence of innocence, and opposed my single voice in arrest of condemnation, against a torrent of overbearing witnesses: this good dame, I confess, took pity on his corporal sufferings, and, like the charitable Samaritan, poured oil and wine into his wounds: I do not aver, take notice, that it was identically oil and wine which she administered, but it was something as good, and served the purpose she intended by it, the allusion is not less apposite, because it is not literal; Heaven will consider

consider the mind, and not scrutinize the medicine. He was guiltless, and we rescued him; friendless, and we protected him; hungry, and we fed him; had he been in prison, I would have come unto him even there, for my bowels yearned towards him in christian charity and compassion: and now, behold he is brave, he wieldeth the sword against the enemies and blasphemers of his faith; he fighteth valiantly in the righteous cause of his king, his country, and his GOD. Who would not do the same? who would not die in such a glorious contest? I would for one.—But out upon it! whither does my passion hurry me? Do I not forget myself? have I not a calling that warneth me from deeds like these; Am I not a preacher of peace?”

Here Ezekiel sunk down in his chair, confounded and abashed, whilst his lips moved and his eyes were turned upwards in secret ejaculation; which Williams observing, kept silence for some few minutes, and then, watching his opportunity, threw in a few consolatory remarks, by way of qualifying his self-reproach, which will be found, by those who think it worth their while to search for them, in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

First Love sinks deep into the human Heart.

“ I AM sorry, friend Daw, that you shou’d seem for a moment to retract the sentiments and expressions which my recital drew from you. What is so natural as to exult in the heroism of a friend? I protest to you, though my profession has
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no more to do with the actual operations of the battle than your's has, yet my heart glows for my countrymen, when I hear them applauded for their valour; and as to this action which I have been relating to you, though our victory was not great in its consequences to the nation at large, yet none cou'd be more glorious to the brave hearts who obtain'd it; in which, let me tell you, our gallant young friend distinguish'd himself in a most conspicuous manner. Had you but seen him, as I did, when he brought Tom Weevil to the cockpit to be dress'd, you wou'd have own'd you had beheld the perfect model of a real hero; such a countenance," (here he turned to Susan) "never in my life did I look upon the like; why, 'twas what we may form to our fancies for the picture of Achilles; such fire in his eyes, but then it was temper'd with so much pity and consideration for the wounded object, who had indeed a most desperate cut across the cheek, that he had got in the boarding——."

At these words Susan shrunk back in her chair, and put her hand before her eyes, whilst Dame May eagerly demanded if poor Tom Weevil was killed, to which Williams answered, that it was a mere flesh wound, in no degree dangerous, and which was just sufficient to leave an honourable scar upon his skin: he then, addressing himself to Ezekiel, proceeded to say—"You, Mr. Daw, and the good Dame here present, have some experience of these matters, but you can have little if any conception of the horrid cases we have to deal with during the carnage of an action. Of this, however, we will not speak in the presence of Mrs. Susan, whose tender heart is ill suited to such descriptions: the virtues of Mr. Henry will be a more pleasing subject to her ears, and of these the catalogue would be in a manner inexhaustible."

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ble." Whilst he proceeded to recount a variety of anecdotes to the credit of Henry, particularly his human exertions for Mr. Delapoer, who was found a prisoner on board the enemy's ship, and also his kindnesses to himself in the negotiation with Doctor Cawdle, he read the heart of Susan in her countenance, and perceived, that whilst he was praising Henry, he was recommending himself, for this her eyes declared with a sensibility that could not be mistaken. First impressions are not easily obliterated; Williams's soft heart had felt those impressions early in life for Susan, then in the first bud of beauty: time, that had matured her form, had improved her charms, and though there was something for delicacy to stumble at in the history of her adventures with Blachford, yet there were such mitigating circumstances to set against it, that he began to feel in himself a strong propensity to wave all refinements, and revert with ardour to his first passion. We have already said, that a more alluring person than Susan's was hardly to be met with; we may now add, that a more susceptible heart than Williams's must have been a rare discovery in nature; if therefore he was not easily revolted by small dangers, it was a consequence of his being operated upon by strong attractions. When they were boy and girl under the same roof, every minute they could rescue from the duties of their service they devoted to each other; at a playful age their love was merely sport and playfulness; as time advanced, opportunities were more greedily sought, and more ingeniously improved; inexperienced youth is prone to curiosity, and the dalliance of the sexes is sure to be progressive; in the path of pleasure there is no pausing-place, upon which the foot of the novice can rest even for a moment's recollection.

So was it with this fond pair ; they had no Mentor at hand to break the spell ; Jemima was herself no edifying example to Susan ; Zachary was no rigid moral master to Williams ; prudence was not the reigning virtue in Susan's character ; self-denial was not the best attribute that Williams had to boast of : as their meetings became more delicious, so they contrived to make them more secret ; still they were subjected to repeated interruptions, and the innocence of Susan was frequently indebted to the petulance of her mistress for its timely rescue : but fortune is not such a friend to virtue, as to work miracles for its sake ; and if there is nothing but chance to save a poor damsel from a false step, I am afraid there is but little chance of her being saved at all. In a soft and yielding moment, Susan's protecting genius being asleep on his post, and love alert and wakeful, Williams *stole unheeded to her chamber*, and, without the church's sanction, was admitted to all the privileges of a husband.

Furtive enjoyments are seldom less fleeting than they ought to be. Our lovers were soon discovered in their meetings, and the consequence was their instant separation. Williams went to seek his fortune at sea, and Susan staid on shore to bewail his absence : not that he left her like a man who runs away from the mischief he has committed ; on the contrary, he tendered to her every recompence in his power, but nothing cannot be divided, and the proffered indemnification was of course postponed till better days should enable him to invite her to a better situation. During the whole of his peregrinations, no rival ever detached his heart from its first love ; he kept in faithful remembrance all his own promises and Susan's favours, anxious to seize the first moment

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his good fortune might present to him for fulfilling his engagements. Three years had now passed away whilst he had been beating the round of service, with little other gain than of experience in his profession. He was now at the age of twenty-three, and Susan had scarce completed her nineteenth year, and within that period events had occurred, which stand recorded in this history, that in one sense favoured their union, and in another discouraged it; but the explanation Henry had given him of Blachford's treachery in the case of Susan's seduction, had qualified his repugnance and converted into pity what would else have been aversion and contempt. In the mean time, her personal attractions were improved by years, and his sensibility not abated by absence; the only struggle he had now to suffer was his dread of being thought a mercenary suitor (for the balance of worldly wealth was strongly on the side of Susan) and his discovery of an impression in Henry's favour, which seemed to him to be paramount to all things else in her remembrance. Of this, however, time and future observation could alone give him the necessary assurance; and in the mean while his attendance upon Mr. Delapoer would in a manner occupy his whole time, and be a sufficient excuse for his delay in entering into any conversation with her, that might draw him into a premature discussion of what was passing in his thoughts.

Whilst matters hung in this suspense, the Reverend Mr. Claypole, impatient to be informed of Delapoer's real situation, and, if possible, to gain some light into his business, called at Susan May's, and meeting with Williams, was not sorry to hear that his patient was no longer in so desperate a state as was at first apprehended. As to the de-

rangement of his senses, concerning which he was particularly inquisitive, Williams naturally told him that there was no mental debility in Mr. Delapoor, except what was incidental to his fever, and even that was considerably abated. Did he know, Claypole asked, what particular concern he had with the Lord Crowbery, that had brought him in such haste into those parts?—To this Williams replied, properly enough, that it was out of his line to pry into those matters; but candidly confessed, that he could collect enough from the rambling discourse that his patient would at times start into, that there was something on his mind of a very irritative as well as interesting nature; and it was much to be wished that some common friend of the parties could seasonably interpose for the prevention of extremities. Claypole, rightly conceiving this to be pointed at himself, said, that for his own part he had no commission to enter upon the business; and being a perfect stranger to the gentleman above stairs, as well as to the motives of his discontent, he should by no means chuse to thrust himself officiously into an unwelcome office, but wait till he should be called upon, when his best endeavour, as a friend of peace, would not fail to be forthcoming. With this profession he broke up the conference, and returned to the castle.

CHAPTER VIII.

When Parties understand each other rightly, Business advances rapidly

IT was in the evening of this day, whilst Ezekiel was engaged with his pipe, and Dame May employed in affairs of the family, that chance threw Williams and his friend Susan together in a moment, and after a manner so pointedly commodious for a *tête-à-tête*, that they must have been ingenious indeed to have found means of avoiding it, without betraying more disinclination towards each other's company, than either of them in reality possessed. The sick man was asleep; Susan had taken up her work; Williams was seated beside her; the parlour-door was shut, and the hour was sacred from interruption.

Susan kept her eyes upon her work; Williams directed his upon her; both parties were embarrassed, and neither could at once find courage to break silence. A kind of preparatory hum, like the tuning of an instrument, bespoke an effort on the part of Williams, this produced a responsive note in unison from Susan, who at the same time raised her eyes from the object they had been fixt upon, and guided them in that direction, as to clasp with his by the way; a soft and almost imperceptible relaxation of the muscles, which none but a lover's sensibility of preception could have construed into a smile, struck courage into his heart, as an invitation to hope, and the words found way:—" 'Tis a long age, in my account of time, since we parted," said Williams.—" And I doubt

I doubt you have suffer'd a great many hardships in that period," replied Susan.—"Many people wou'd have thought them such," he rejoined; "but where the whole soul is engross'd by one over-ruling affliction, lesser evils are scarcely felt."—"That is true, indeed," she replied; "if such was the state of your mind, Mr. Williams, you might well be indifferent to small inconveniences, when so great a sorrow possess'd you altogether."—"What cou'd be more afflicting," he said, "than the cruel necessity I was under of flying from one I so dearly lov'd? Trust me, my dear Susan, it was a heart-breaking separation, and that nothing but the hopes of establishing myself in some such way of business as might enable me to fulfil those engagements towards you, which I ever held as sacred, cou'd have supported my spirits through such a length of time; and suffer me to assure you, my sweet girl, that my heart has been steady to its first love through all changes and chances; it has been ever your's; and if I hesitate at this moment to convince you of its sincerity, it is because fortune has made your scale so much heavier than mine, that I might perhaps be thought to act from mercenary motives, an imputation which I disdain and disavow from my very soul."

"That is an imputation," said Susan, "I shall never make against you. But alas! those very advantages I have gain'd in point of fortune must be regarded by you, who know my history, as insuperable objections to any views you might otherwise have had. An unmarried mother will never be your object in an honourable light; and neither you nor I have any longer the plea of inexperience'd youth to excuse our frailties, as once we had."—Here she cast down her eyes, and

and yielded to a suffusion of blushes, that so captivated the enamour'd heart of Williams, that by an irresistible impulse he caught her in his arms, and, in a transport of love, smothered her with caresses. A negociation conducted upon these terms was not likely to be very tedious between parties so tempered as Williams and Susan May.—“I protest to truth,” he cried, “that the wrongs you have suffered from that villainous seducer only render you more dear to my heart; and more lovely in my eyes, inasmuch as they add pity to affection, and inspire me with the most ardent desire to stand forth as your defender against all the world, who shall dare to breathe a word against your reputation. By my soul, Susan, if I could flatter myself that your heart was untoucht by any other passion, than that which I first planted in it; if I could believe that no happier lover, superior to me in every point, had effac'd the impression I once made on that dear bosom, it is not all the injuries that Blachford, or a hundred such as Blachford, cou'd accumulate upon you wou'd hold me back one moment from your arms. No, no, I have no such principles by nature, nor have I learnt any such amongst my country's brave defenders on the sea, as shou'd induce me to desert the girl that has favour'd me with her confidence, because I found her either plung'd in the extremest poverty, or suffering under undeserv'd disgrace.”

One of the kindest glances which Susan's fascinating eyes could bestow, witnessed the effect, which this gallant declaration had upon her heart: it was a signal of something more than hope to her happy lover, and produced no common returns of gratitude from him—but it has been more than once made known to the readers of this history, that we are no dealers in description; to recite what

what is said, so far, at least, as it refers to the elucidation of events, is all that we undertake for; it must be left to imagination to fill up the scenes with action and dumb-shew. After an interval in which, though the parties were silent, the business did not sleep, Susan candidly explained to Williams the nature of her attachment to Henry, giving him a brief but fair account how it arose, to what length it reached, and where it stopt; and this account had a farther claim to his entire belief, inasmuch as it perfectly accorded in all points with what our hero himself had told him in their conversation on the subject. It was natural that such a person as Henry's should attract attention; it was impossible that a nature so animated as Susan's should overlook it. But as honour forbade her to accept his hand, when the humility of his fortune might have tempted him to offer it, so the change in his circumstances, and the attachment he had formed, were now become such insuperable bars to hope of any sort, that all danger and delusion were totally at an end: it was clear that nothing had occurred which Susan had cause to regret, and that nothing could occur which Williams had any reason to fear. Doubt and mistrust being thus removed, and a mutual good understanding established with absolute confidence in each other's honour, Williams renewed his former vows, and Susan scrupled not to confess her former liking: if we had the privilege of the comic poet, who makes marriages a momentary business, we would couple these lovers in those holy bands without loss of time, and the rather because we are not perfectly sure but that they ought to have been married, or acted as if they had been married; but alas! we historians are tied down to forms, and dare not do them violence, though they

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they might not be so scrupulously regarded by those, whom we have at this moment found occasion to bring together on the scene. Let it be remembered, however, in the way of palliation, that there is no moment so dangerous to female discretion, none so favourable to an ardent suitor, as that in which first love is renewed.

O Nature, whom alone it is my destiny to follow, when I attempt to paint the characters of my fellow-creatures, why wilt thou not always lead me through pure and unsoiled paths, in the way that I most wish to go, setting up a mark at every resting place for morality to steer by, and presenting no one object to my view but what throws a lustre on the history of man, and reflects a bright example to that portion of posterity that shall chance to read it? Why wilt thou compel me to record the frailties of thy fairest works, thou mother of all nations? How often have I combated thy obstinate authority to the length almost of rebellion itself, whilst I have been persuading thee to acknowledge some unfriended outcasts from society as children of thine own! What is it I have not attempted, in my zeal to reconcile thee to the sufferers by prejudice? But thou art capriciously ingenious in devising models for thy academy, which are dashed with blemishes so cunningly interwoven into the very essence of the work, that he who aims to mend a part mars the whole. In copying thy productions, so faithful must be the hand of the imitator, that every blot in the original must be reflected in the transcript.

CHAPTER IX.

Some People preach over their Liquor.

WHILST sleep was refreshing the exhausted faculties of Delapoe, and love in possession of the whole soul of Williams, Ezekiel's pipe was out, and his meditations at an end; the fire he had kept up in both quarters was burnt down to the embers; and as he was coming from the next door, Susan, who kept a good look-out against a surprise, adjusted her apartment, and put herself in proper trim to receive him.

O woman! woman! thou art a curious compound of sincerity and finesse, of candour and cunning; alert in thy resources when discovery threatens, feeble in thy defences when temptation assails thee! Love, thou art a traitor, an incendiary, a thief, on whom the hardest name I could bestow would be a term too gentle for thy unutterable wickedness: all the world knows thee, yet more than half of it trusts thee to their cost: though they call thee a god, it would disgrace the very devil himself to claim kindred with thee. There is Susan, for instance, to whose virtues I would else have consecrated the fairest page in this immortal history, would have been a mirror of all human excellence but for thee, thou insinuating imp!

"Heyday!" exclaimed the preacher, looking her in the face as she met him at the parlour door, "what a change is here in thy countenance, daughter of mine! I should guess thou hast some extraordinary good news to tell me by the liveliness of thine eye, and the lustre of thy complexion. Is thy sick guest on the recovery? Hath our friend

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Williams cheared thee with the glad tidings of his convalescence? And truly he also doth appear very sensibly exhilarated. Why this is well, my children; this is as it should be; this is the feast of the soul, which conscience serves up to us when it brings into review the good deeds we have been doing. This is the fruit of love, my girl, of that love I have often recommended to thee, as yielding the most rapturous gratification to the senses; joys, in which thou mayst indulge without stint or remorse: no fear, my good child, that thou shou'dst be satiated with these enjoyments, for they are congenial to thy nature, they flow from thy benevolence, and in sharing them with thy fellow-creatures thou fulfillest the great purpose of thy creation. And thou, friend Williams, art a young man of goodly parts and endowments; thou hast done well in thy vocation, working the good work of love in conjunction with this hospitable damsel, and comforting her kind heart with the timely efforts of thy successful skill and experience in the secret powers and energies of nature, with which gift I do pronounce thee to be in no ordinary degree furnished and endowed; and happy is it not only for the stranger above stairs, but for all our neighbours, that thou art come to reside and practise in these parts. Now then we will sit down and rejoice over the reflection of a well-spent day, whilst the good dame, our willing caterer, shall provide us a temperate refreshment, with a can of that mild wholesome beverage which our own fields afford: I envy not the vineyards of France, Portugal or Spain, I covet not their intoxicating, their adulterated draughts; a tankard of my own native ale, fresh, smiling in my face, and mantling to my lips, whilst both the senses of taste and smell sympathise in the joint delight, is to me a
treat

treat which all the vats of the wine-press cannot compare with. Come, my child, let thy good mother replenish the pitcher, and we will pledge each other to the health of the poor stranger above stairs, and to the many and happy repetitions of this gladsome moment."

Thus having predicated, Ezekiel deposited his hat and staff in a corner of the room, whilst Susan glanced a smile at Williams so expressive and withal so sweet, that the muse of comedy, or thou her second self, inimitable Eliza! might have deigned to acknowledge it; then springing nimbly from her seat, she hastened to obey the social proposal.

Reader, to thy heart I dedicate this humble scene! Let thy fancy fill it up with all those pleasing images that creative genius can supply. Call forth thy benevolence, let every joyous particle that warms thy veins and sets thy heart in motion towards mankind animate the composition, and then thou shalt paint the dame with glowing philanthropy in her countenance, and the foaming goblet in her hand, entering the room, followed by the jocund miller, father of the brave Tom Weevil, and welcomed by all voices with the glorious all-hail of neighbourly love and cordiality: see them assembled round the board, hand clasped by hand, lip succeeding lip in their salutations to the spirit-stirring tankard, whilst the triumphs of old England, and libations to the health of her brave defenders, circulated round the table, and whilst Williams recounted to the exulting father the gallant actions of his boy, not omitting to relate the circumstance of his wound, and the honourable scar he would bring home as a trophy of his victory and fame.

A flood of thanks to Williams poured from the hopper of old Weevil's lips, backed with hearty invitations

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invitations to the mill, and congratulations upon his settling amongst them, garnished with many oaths and protestations of good will and zeal for his success.—“Sblood! my dear Billy,” he vociferated in his loudest key, “I would not only be contented to fall sick to bring you custom, but damn me if I would not even die to do you credit.”

“Hold, hold!” cried Ezekiel, interposing, “I swear not at all, friend Thomas, neither believe that the death of the patient can bring credit to his doctor. Die, if it be required of thee, for thy country’s sake; die for thy religion, for thy faith, for the defence of thy family, but in the mean time live for thyself and thy friends here present, and drink about for good fellowship.”

“Aye, by my soul,” quoth old Tom, “I shall be glad to stop a bit longer amongst you, for I have a heart for my friends, and thou art a true one, Zekiel, I will say for thee, and so is my dear Billy and the good dame, and my pretty pretty Mrs. Susan; damn it——”—(“Hush,” cried Ezekiel). “I would fain see the scoundrel that dares wag his tongue to her disparagement in my hearing. Zooks! I would soon clap a stopper on his clack; and I hope I shall live to see the day very shortly when she shall be married to her deserts: a fair creature, friend Williams, and a dainty one, though I say it to her face, as ever the blessed sun shone light upon; is she not?” Here Williams nodded assent, and shook him by the hand, whilst Susan tittered and looked archly under her eye-lids.—“What!” continued the miller, “she must not live in this lone house, like a mope; when some good fellow may be blest in her arms, and have corn, wine and oil in abundance: why, ’tis against nature, and so the good mother will say, and so says friend Zekiel, for all he looks so grave upon it.
Come,

Come, Doctor, I'll give you a text, and you shall give us a preachment upon it. *Increase and multiply."*

Though levity of conversation seldom passed un-reproved by Ezekiel, especially when it glanced upon sacred topics, yet it so happened that just then Ezekiel was in no disposition for reproof. The exhilarating tankard had given him a flow of soul, that would not suffer him to chill the gaiety of his companions; yet as far as Weevil's challenge went for a preachment, as he termed it, the good apostle was no flincher; and perhaps never found himself in a much better cue to take up the gauntlet.

Planting himself therefore in his oratorical attitude, with his thumbs tucked into his waistcoat pockets, and his fingers expanded like the claws of a bird, he gave two or three solemn hums to bespeak attention, and began as follows:—"When I revolve in my thoughts the wide-wasting ravages of death, I cannot but regard with gratitude and respect those prolific matrons, by whose labour of love the gaps and chasms in creation are filled up and replenished, which sword, pestilence, and famine are hourly making. Praise be to their patriotic endeavours in an honest way, and much are they to be preferred to those solitary and sequestered damsels, who, shutting themselves up in nunneries and convents, keep their natural faculties inert and lifeless, leaving to others of their sex to struggle under heavy burthens, whilst they go free and partake not of the toil. If all women were of their persuasion, the world must wear out like an annuity, and cease with the present generation; for I believe I may boldly assert, that no way has yet been discovered by the curious in all ages, how such a consequence could be prevented, if the fair
sex

sex were one and all to stand out, and no longer lend a helping hand to the work. Again, when I call to recollection, that before a single babe can be produced in the world, two rational free agents must be in the same mind to give it life; I am astonished there can have been through so many ages such a coincidence of sentiment and good will between the sexes, as to keep the work going; and more praise of course must be due to that party, on whom the weight bears hardest, which, if I rightly guess, is the woman. I speak under correction, my worthy neighbours; for having no positive experience to guide me in either case, I will not take upon myself to pronounce from my own knowledge on the point in question. Tell me who can, for I profess it is past my finding out, to what secret cause it is owing that the population of this globe of earth is upheld. How comes it to pass, that there is no drawing back, no renegation in that quarter where the whole pain and peril of the task falls with such partial preponderance? When I reflect on this, I own to you I have sometimes trembled for the fate of posterity, fearing it should be cut off at once, and the world docked of it's entail at a stroke: but when I look round me, and perceive how vain these apprehensions are, and that my fair countrywomen, for whom I have such fears, fear nothing for themselves, but carry the world merrily on, (and indeed in many instances with more haste than good speed, as the saying is) I take heart and believe, that as the hand of heaven set it a going, nothing but the same hand will stop it, concluding within myself, that when the commandment was given to increase and multiply, there was something given with it that makes up to those who are at the pains to obey it."

"You need not doubt it," said old Weevil;

and

and immediately Williams, who pretty well guessed how Susan thought upon the subject, started some other topic and changed the discourse.

CHAPTER. X.

Four Parties fairly matched at a round Game of Hypocrisy.

AT the castle, in the mean time, all parties were busily employed in plots upon each other. The Reverend Mr. Claypole made his best use of the intelligence he had picked up from Williams for alarming the Lord Crowbery, and grounding upon his fears his favourite proposal of a temporary retirement and a speedy marriage. His lordship gave him the hearing with all due courtesy and good breeding, but with no inclination to follow it in any other point but what suited his own purpose; as to quitting Crowbery they were both of a mind, but so far from turning it to Claypole's views of hastening the marriage, his intention was to employ it as the means of totally avoiding it. Miss Fanny entertained her fancy in devising projects for post-matrimonial amusements; and in these it may well be doubted if his Lordship's honour and repose were the ruling objects of her meditation. Privileges of rank, extension of authority, and indulgence of propensities, attached to her constitution, had certainly some share of her attention, and had her system taken place, the wrongs her predecessor suffered might have been amply revenged.

Captain

Captain Crowbery, whom my Lord had summoned to his assistance, obeyed the call, and, having heard the case, acted as gentlemen in his predicament mostly act, and recommended those very measures which he found his principal predisposed to pursue. It was therefore resolved upon with joint consent, that it would be adviseable for his Lordship to take a tour upon the continent, whilst the Captain kept guard upon the castle, with full powers at discretion to get rid of Miss Fanny and her uncle, upon the best terms he could make; and here let it be remarked for the edification of my female readers, that those very steps, which Miss Fanny took to secure her conquest, were urged against her as the first and strongest impediments to the completion of it.

This commission, it may well be supposed, was not in all respects the most pleasant to the undertaker of it, but it was attended with no small bribe to his diligence, inasmuch as in the event of his Lordship's death without heirs, the Captain was next in succession to his title and estate, and it was something more than probable, on the supposition of Miss Fanny's marriage taking place, that my Lord would not long be childless. The Captain was a man of spirit and address, not naturally disposed to put his hand to every mean unworthy job, but too good a politician to oppose his cousin's will, and not so much his own enemy as to have an unconquerable repugnance against serving him in a case like the present.

It is not to be expected that his coming at this crisis was the most welcome of all events to the uncle and niece, and it certainly required some management to mask the plot he had concerted against them. To Mr. Claypole he talked freely on the reasons of his invitation, ascribing them to the
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the alarm that Delapoer's arrival had given to his noble cousin, hinting in no very distant terms at his want of spirit, and acknowledging in conformity to his ideas, that the best thing his Lordship could do, would be to step aside for a time, and leave the matter, whatever it might be, to be made up in his absence by deputation, which, he observed, was indeed an unpleasant office, though he was ready to undertake it for the good of all parties, and the rescue of his kinsman's reputation.

This passed tolerably well upon Claypole, who knew enough of Lord Crowbery's want of spirit, to think it perfectly natural that he should wish to have the Captain about him, and as this gentleman agreed with his wishes in advising the same measures for a change of place, he saw no immediate danger of his schemes being traversed, and therefore continued to flatter himself that the promised marriage was in a fair train to take place.

Captain Crowbery had a part also to act with Miss Fanny, and upon this he entered with considerable advantages; for besides that her character was too open to be mistaken, and her foibles well known to him, he had the requisites of an agreeable manner, a good person, great powers of flattery, and a facility of assuming any species of disguise that might suit his purposes. With her he put on a gay and careless air of a mere soldier of fortune, who considered her as the lady elect of the head of his house, and paid court to her accordingly. This so effectually flattered her vanity, that she seemed never weary of encouraging his humility with the smile of protection, nor was he deficient in humouring her with opportunities for the display of those graces so condescendingly bestowed. He had enough of that faculty of small talk to be sufficiently eloquent upon insignificant

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topics ; he could point a compliment, or envelope a double meaning with all the readiness of a practitioner in that commodious art, and indeed he was not behindhand with any man of modern honour in the true principles of the sect ; for he had courage to justify seduction, and gallantry to despise friendship, whenever the charms of a wife, of a daughter, or (which is more than either) of a mistress came in contact with his passions, and with opportunity to profit by : with these accomplishments we need not wonder that he succeeded in his efforts to lull the suspicion of a lady not over incredulous ; and had his ambition prompted him to higher objects than a little inglorious deceit, we may presume he would have been no less fortunate, for Miss Fanny seemed in a very likely train to overlook both his situation and her own.

His Lordship's preparations in the mean time, were put forward with unremitting diligence : as it was necessary for him to provide himself for his tour, and settle his remittances with his banker before he set forward, a journey to town became indispensable, and for this he had only to pretend the customary occasions of consulting his conveyancer upon the marriage settlement, and providing a licence, together with all other necessary appendages to a noble bride. These were pleasant tidings to the parties interested, and his Lordship's preparations were cordially seconded by the reverend uncle of the young Lady, whose interest was so much concerned in quickening his departure, that she seemed to have forgot the obvious compliment of lamenting it. There was a concurrence of circumstances, that made it in a manner unavoidable for his Lordship to invite Mr. Claypole to bear him company on this jaunt : it had its pro and con in point of convenience, but as it

was

was no difficult matter for him to give that reverend gentleman the slip in such a town as London, the offer was made of a place in the chaise with all seeming sincerity, and accepted with no other hesitation, but as to the point of decorum towards his niece, who in that case would be left to keep house with Captain Crowbery alone; but as this scruple was with himself singly, and not admitted by my Lord himself, or the Lady elect, who indeed treated all such out-of-date ideas with the contempt they merited, it was withdrawn almost as soon as it was advanced, and the engagement was made.

"I think," said my Lord to the Captain on the eve before his departure, "this business will be better manag'd between you and my Madam in the absence of the parson, than if he was to stay where he is, and make a third person in the fray: two to one is odds in argument, and Claypole is a plaguy proser, as I shall find to my cost, but I'll keep the wheels going till I have him safe in London, and then I'll soon bequeath him to his meditations: a fellow that has treated his own patron with such ingratitude deserves no mercy. As to Miss Fanny, I do'n't expect you will find much difficulty in qualifying her anger, for as love is out of the question, which of all passions is the most turbulent, you will have only to contend with a little dogged disappointment, and when she has spent her fire in abusing me, in which I give you free leave to join her, I predict that you will find her as reasonable and as flexible as you can wish; only let me escape from her talons, and I have little care what becomes of her afterwards."

"That's a happy indifference," cried the Captain, smiling, "and I can only promise you I will do my best to pacify her by every means but marrying her in your stead, which I suspect wou'd not altogether suit her purpose, and mine not at all."

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“Ladies of her sort,” resumed the Peer, “are not intitled to much delicacy, and in my opinion merit little pity; so that you have full powers from me to use your own discretion, which, if it deserves the name, will never suffer you to fall into that snare she had spread for me. She has ten thousand charms as a mistress, but not one recommendation as a wife: the devil of a temper, and an unbounded propensity to play the devil with it; for whatever she may say to the contrary, I am in my own mind perfectly persuaded that she dealt a foul blow to your antagonist Henry in the vengeance of her disappointment, and then pretended he had hurt himself with a knife by accident: therefore have a care of your ribs, George, for if you should fall into the same fault as he did, ’tis a chance but you meet the same fate.”

“’Tis not just the death I should chuse,” said the Captain, “nor am I the man in the world to stand out like that young Joseph, against ladies who make love with weapons in their hands; I would rather of the two, meet the favour than the punishment.”—“Be prepar’d then,” replied the Peer, “for if I have any guess, you are not unlikely to encounter the alternative: for my own part, I am clear in conscience, and shall die in the persuasion that I am neither the first, nor shall be the last in her good graces.”

Here a gentle tap at the door announced the fair subject of their discourse in person. His Lordship in a moment dressed his face in its best trim, to welcome her with looks of love, and with all due regard to truth, declared that it was of her and her alone they were conversing, and that he flattered himself the tender instructions he had been giving to his cousin would be punctually observed.—“He will tell you, fairest of creatures,” said he, fondly taking

taking her hand in his, "for he knows what place you hold in my affections: it is on your account only I submit to be a stranger to my own home for a time, but they will be heavy hours of absence from my charmer; and Oh! when we meet again——" Here his Lordship thought proper to be much affected, and his voice faltered, whilst the gentle Fanny acted all the ceremonials of a tender blush, which wanted nothing but change of colour to make it real, and artifice was thus repaid with artifice: meanwhile, a wandering glance stole its way by a side-way passage towards the Captain, who with infinite gravity of countenance respectfully liberated her hand, that was then held captive by my Lord's, murmuring in soft accents whilst he secretly pressed it in his own—"Come, come, my lovely cousin, you must let me part these hands, so soon to be united for ever: scenes like this will only agonize you both."

CHAPTER. XI.

Breakfast Table Talk.

THE next morning our travellers started with the sun, whilst sleep held the bright eyes of Fanny Claypole in his downy fetters, and spared her the painful task of squeezing out a parting tear. At the hour of breakfast, she issued forth from her chamber, armed for conquest. We have already observed, that this young votary of the graces was in the art of undress eminently successful: on this occasion she had by no means forgot to employ that art in such a stile of studied negligence, as contrived to display her person in its most

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most attractive points, by a seeming carelessness in those articles on which most care was in fact bestowed; and this we take to be the very first excellence, the grand desideratum of the modern toilet.

A pensive look, that had an air of sorrow for the absence of her Lord, was necessarily assumed, and the Captain could do no less than counterfeit a sympathising face of pity on the meeting: now we have the experience of human nature to inform us, that when an agreeable young gentleman takes upon him to play the comforter to a tempting young woman in affliction, it is so much like making love to her, that he seldom fails to run one office into the other. The observation was not discredited by the case in point, for whilst Miss Fanny acted her part to admiration, the Captain sustained his share in the farce of hypocrisy with no less spirit and address: her sorrow was just enough to find occupation for his attentions, and not so much as to discourage him from persisting in them from a despair of their effects; in short, she was cheered, and he was flattered by the discovery that his consolation was not lost. In their conversation, which he took care to regulate according to the point he had in view, he did not scruple to glance at the character of his noble relation, in such particulars as might serve to pave the way for his purpose: he stood in admiration at his good fortune, in gaining the affections of a lady so beautiful, so young, and so worthy of a more accomplished lover: he was sorry to confess, but truth could not be disguised, that his cousin did not make the best husband in the world to his former lady; in fact, his temper was not so good as he could wish, his heart was narrow, and his disposition unsocial and morose: a soul like her's, he

he said, wou'd find itself curb'd and confin'd by rules so rigid as he laid down: what were rank and title if they did not bring happiness with them? and who was there in the kingdom she might not aspire to? in short, if this was a matter of choice, he begg'd, pardon for what he had been saying; if it was a match of prudence, he wished it might not deceive her expectations in the issue of it.

These insinuations, well timed and artfully introduced, had their desired effect; they saved Miss Fanny all the pains which hypocrisy would have cost her, inasmuch as they threw Captain Crowbery entirely on her mercy, and put his fate in her hands: had he been guarded in his discourse she would certainly have been inexcusably imprudent to have trusted him with her real sentiments; but when he had so far committed himself on the subject, she saw no danger in meeting him with the like candour, and vindicating her taste at the expence of her sincerity, for she was ashamed to be supposed guilty of a real liking for so contemptible a person as Lord Crowbery. Not discerning what motives he could have for reposing so much confidence in her, but that of good opinion and zeal for her happiness, she felt greatly flattered by the turn of his discourse, and knowing how absolutely dependant he was upon his cousin, and that he had been uttering words, which if repeated against him would never be forgiven she said in a stile of mock reproof—"What a giddy thoughtless soul you are to talk this language to me, and put it in my power to ruin you with my Lord."

"If ever I deserve to be so punish'd by you," he replied, "I shou'd have no right to complain of being betray'd; but if without my deserving you shou'd think fit to do it, the necessity I shou'd be under of ceasing to esteem you, wou'd be the greatest misfortune I cou'd suffer by the event."

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"That is very gallant, on my word; but why do you suppose I am the one woman in the world that can keep a secret; and what do you think you discover in me to trust me with your whole fortune?"

"Shall I answer that question fully and sincerely?"

"No," she replied, "for that perhaps would not be to answer it favourably; and women, you know, are naturally fond of flattery. Don't you see what mischief I could make, if I was wickedly inclin'd to it?"

"Whatever your inclinations are," said the Captain, looking tenderly upon her, "I would have you gratify them, though my insignificant self was made the sacrifice; for after all, what am I but a soldier of fortune, and what is my fortune but the sword by my side? There is my subsistence, and that my Lord cannot take from me, or, if he could, he dare not use it."

"Fie upon you," smiling, she replied, "you can't suppose but he would use his sword in a good cause."—"He would hardly be persuaded," rejoined the Captain, "to think any cause was good enough for that, I believe. He will never let it see the light in anger with his good will, else that young Henry would have brought it out of its hiding-place, for he spelt hard to get a sight of it."

"That's a brave lad after all," said Fanny. "I have a right to say so," quoth the man of war; and now this Delapoer, this man of mystery, hangs over us like a cloud: what you may think of this journey to town, my sweet lady, I won't pretend to say, but for my part I must think, if all his Lordship's fears were out of the question, there would not be much left for his love to boast

of."—"Oh! you mortifying creature," she exclaimed, "if I could believe this, he deserves—"—"What?" demanded the Captain interposing, "what does he deserve? Not the handsomest woman in the creation, I will boldly say; not the transport of being wrapt in those arms, which were never meant by nature to embrace a coward."—"Well, well," she rejoined, "perhaps it is not the best use I cou'd put them to."—"What pity then!" he observed, "it shou'd be the only one."—"The only one," she repeated, breaking into a loud laugh, "surely you draw your inference very nimbly, my good friend, but am I bound to make them good? Do you think that every marriage presupposes liking? Can you find no other motives for a connection between a simple M like me, and a titled personage like your cousin but a preference that wou'd disgrace my judgment and a passion that has no interest in my heart?"

"None, so heaven help me," cried the Captain, "in your case I can find no plea for the sacrifice and I should think myself bound to congratulate you on your escape, if you was never more to see his face."—"Oh! you cruel monster!" she exclaimed, rallying him, "wou'd you break heart with the very mention of it? Do you suppose a married lady is without resources? is she therefore lost to all the world, or all the world to her? Are there no happy wives but what are in love with their husbands? Nay, let me put the question closer, are there no wives in love with any but their husbands? Come, come, I'll leave you no longer."—So Saying, she rolled a pellet of the bread on the breakfast-table, and threw it at him in that pretty playful manner, which we have often seen it done by many a fair lady with exquisite address and good aim.

If a man knows any thing of modern breeding, he knows how to answer all attacks like this: the Captain made too much of it, for he swore it had wounded him to the heart; there was a little too much knight-errantry in this, and he did better when he drew a rose from his button-hole, and gallantly tossed it into her lap, declaring that no foldier ought to take a blow without returning it: he had done better still, if he had said nothing, for at best this is but the trick and pantomime of coquetry and wantonness. This is the time when wit is not wanted, and action takes the whole scene upon itself.

Miss Fanny, with the sweetest grace in nature, took the rose and placed it in her bosom, adjusting it with all that pretty difficulty of choice, that rivetted the beholder's eyes upon the charming operation.—“Blest flower,” the Captain cried, “to what a paradise have I promoted thee?”—Then smiting his hands together, sprung from his chair, and turned to the window, as if to divert some emotion too violent for his controul.—“Come,” cried the Lady, rising also from her seat, “we have talk'd nonsense long enough, let us take a grave walk in the garden, and drive nonsense out of our brains.”

Her cloak was in the room, the Captain flew to reach it to her, and in assisting to put it on made so many awkward blunders, and was treated with so many pretty reprimands, that few cloaks perhaps have given room to more raillery, or been less applied to the purposes which cloaks in general are understood to be made for.

To the garden they went, and here we will leave them to ramble amidst shady bowers and love-inspiring grotts, not the most innocent pair that ever took their solitary walk in garden or in grove,

yet fairly matched in nature as in art, and fitted for each other. Whither they went, and what they did, we are not careful to recount; for though the justice of the historian should be equal towards all characters he is concerned with, yet he must be allowed to dwell with more delight, and expatiate with greater felicity upon the amiable than upon the unamiable: as far as these prejudices may be deemed excusable, so far I hope I may be indulged in them, and therefore I shall now drop the curtain upon this scene, as I have upon others of the like description, and close the eleventh book of this important history now hastening to its conclusion.

END OF BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

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BOOK THE TWELFTH.

CHAPTER I.

The Author's last Address to his Readers.

WE are now drawing nigh to the conclusion of our history, and if my kind reader has found amusement in his task, I shall not regret the toil and labour of mine. Great must be that author's mortification, who miscarries in a trivial undertaking; and certain it is, that small matters should never be attempted without strong presumption of success. Something there must be in every man's view, who commits himself to the press; and as all speculations upon profit are now becoming more and more precarious, there seems little left to animate the adventurer but a disinterested passion for fame: I think it is therefore to the credit of the corps, that we still continue to volunteer it with such spirit, that no abatement is yet discernible either in our numbers or exertions. When I search my own heart for the motives that have operated with such activity upon me for resorting to my pen, I find myself impelled by a principle I am not ashamed of, since it has been uniformly that of doing every thing in my power for keeping alive a general spirit of good humour, and endearing man to man, by bringing characters under review, which prejudice has kept at distance from the mass of society; I have never failed to lend my feeble hand to their's, who are benevolently employed in recommending love and harmony to mankind: I love my contemporaries, and detest that language so much in use, which tends to sink
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the present age on a comparison with ages past; and as I hold this to be an illiberal and ungenerous propensity, I thank God I have reached that time of life when it is chiefly prevalent, and yet perceive myself more than ever abhorrent from the practice of it.

I must now send my hero into the world to shift for himself; I have done what I could for him whilst he was under my care, and have bequeathed him nature for his guide at parting. The trials and temptations I have exposed him to, are such as might befall any person in his situation, and not greater than every man of steady principles, without any romantic strain of virtue or courage, may resolutely meet. I have not set his character upon stilts for sentimental enthusiasts to gaze at, but kept him on the plain ground with nature's common stock, studying to endow him with the patient virtues rather than the proud.

To my heroine, I have given as many charms as the reader's imagination shall be disposed to afford her, without being indebted to descriptions, which I reject upon conscience, having so often read them in other novelists with satiety and disgust, and I flatter myself, my Isabella will appear not the less attractive for the very few and slight demands I have made upon her health and constitution, not having been able to discover, amongst all the numerous examples of sickly and tormented heroines, any peculiar delicacy in their diseases, or much amusement in their casualties: in one instance only I have fallen in with the fashion.

I have kept my narrative free from the perplexities of episode and digression, and given the scene to my characters without any intrusion of my own person, which I hold to be an unpardonable impertinence. Of poetry I have made no use, and of quotation

quotation so very sparingly as scarce to be perceptible. The incidents, I trust, are in no case improbable; and as to that combination of circumstances, which appears to criminate my hero in the second book, I have, since the writing of it, been told of a case upon record, which so nearly resembles it as to give my narrative the air of being founded upon fact in that particular, which in reality it was not. In point of style, I flatter myself the critic will not find much to reprehend; but in that and every other particular I am fairly before him; let him strike with justice, and I will not murmur at the stroke.

And now, if this page shall meet the eyes of a certain lady, not less distinguished for her many amiable qualities than for her exalted rank, she will perceive that I have fulfilled her instructions, and composed a novel, to the best of my ability, in the form she recommended and prescribed. Uncertain of its fate, I forbear to make known whose commands I have been honoured with, content if she alone is satisfied with my obedience, and not entirely disappointed with the execution of a work, which but for her I never should have undertaken.

CHAPTER. II.

The History goes back to the Hero.

THE sudden disappearance of Delapoer, and the state of mind in which he had departed, caused great uneasiness to Henry, and damped those joys he would else have reaped in the unrestrained society of his beloved Isabella, to whom every

every hour of his time was devoted. Her health was now so nearly re-established, that Sir Roger had named a day for his return to Manstock, and that was now so near at hand, that Henry was alarmed lest the time should not allow for his father's coming back, and till that event took place, or some intelligence was obtained, duty fixed him to the spot he was in. He knew too well the resentful feelings of his father, and the strong expressions he had repeatedly thrown out against Lord Crowbery, to be at any loss to find a motive for the suddenness and secrecy of his departure, and those conjectures were as painful as they were plausible; not that he apprehended any danger to his father's person from a supposed discussion with that unworthy Lord, for he had all possible contempt for his want of spirit; but it was the impropriety of the thing itself, and the unfitness of the undertaker, which struck him so forcibly, and presented so many unpleasant thoughts upon reflection, that he debated very seriously within himself whether he should not set out upon a venture, in the hopes of overtaking his father, and dissuading him from the interview. The practicability of this, however, was made more than doubtful by the time that had elapsed, before he had intelligence of Mr. Delapoer's departure, so that when he came to confer with Sir Roger upon the idea which had started in his mind, that worthy gentleman had so many good reasons to oppose against it, and his own maturer thoughts, prompted withal by an unseen advocate, suggested so many more, that he resolved upon waiting the issue of his father's promised return; till after some days anxious expectation, a letter from Williams to Zachary, written after Delapoer's arrival at Crowbery, put an end to all suspense as to the destination of the absentee, but

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gave at the same time so alarming an account of the illness he had been seized with, that Henry apprehending him to be in the utmost degree of danger, no longer hesitated what to do.

He had provided himself with two excellent riding horses, and Tom Weevil received orders for making ready without delay. The distance was little more than sixty miles, and it was his purpose, for expedition sake, to ride part of the way, but there still remained the painful task of reconciling Isabella to the necessity of an unexpected parting. This was a distressful moment, for though a heart like her's could not scruple to admit the urgency of the call, yet love and tender apprehension could not be made to accord, without anguish, to the disappointment. Neither was Sir Roger himself a disinterested party in the discussion of this unwelcome business; for when he saw the struggle it occasioned to the fond, yet candid heart of Isabella, he offered to set out the next morning with his whole family, if Henry would bear them company; but as Sir Roger's equipage was in the style of ancient times, and bore not the least similitude to a mail-coach, a distance of sixty miles was to him a journey of two days, whilst our hero's impatience did not mean to appropriate more than six hours to the road; a compromise was therefore struck upon by Henry, who engaged to come back and give them the meeting at the inn where they rested for the night unless, he found his father's situation such as to prevent it. This was eagerly embraced by Isabella, who, at parting from him with eyes full of tears, and a look of the tenderest affection, said to him, "Go, then, and may success attend you! Remember only you have that in charge, which is infinitely dearer to me than the life you have preserv'd."

His horses were at the door, duty pressed, time was on the wing, he snatched a hasty adieu, and, light as Perseus, or the equestrian son of Leda, sprung into the saddle, and was out of sight in an instant—"He is gone," cried Zachary, who, with Sir Roger and Isabella, had attended him to the door, he is off like a shot; 'tis a rare thing to be young and nimble; but after all, I'm afraid his labour will be lost, and he will come too late, for I augur ill from Williams's account of Mr. Delapoer's case."—"Heaven forbid!" cried Isabella, "that any such unhappiness as you predict shou'd befall him."—"Come, come," said Sir Roger, "we will not anticipate misfortunes."—Then taking Isabella's arm under his, walked forth to give his orders to the servants without doors for the next day's journey.

"I perceive, my dear child," said he as they passed along, "tho' your life has been sav'd by your friend who has just left us, your heart is irrecoverably lost. It behoves us therefore to consider what you have substituted in its place, that so we may compute and strike the balance between profit and loss. If I did not think as highly of Henry's virtues, and predict as favourably of his temper, as an old man like me ought in reason to do of a young one like him, I shou'd contemplate my lovely Isabella's situation with alarm and terror; for tho' I shou'd not despair but my authority might prevent imprudence, I fear it wou'd not serve to extinguish love: it demands therefore all the prepossession that I entertain for Henry's character to bring me to acquiesce, as you may now perceive I do, in your decided attachment to him. I own to you, my Isabella, I once thought no circumstances cou'd have induced me to favour a connection with him or any person under his predicament; but it seems as if Providence had decreed, that in spite of all
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my prejudices, I shou'd be compell'd by the force of facts to be the convert of his virtues, and renounce my opposition to him. How strongly have events conspir'd to mark this out, since fortune first made him known to us by throwing him in the last extremity of distress upon the unexpected protection of a mysterious mother! what an escape had he from the murderous designs of Blachford, and the desperate rage of that infuriated wanton! What perils did he incur in the boarding of the Frenchman! and what but the hand of Heaven itself cou'd so critically conduct him to your rescue in the last awful instant, that stood betwixt you and a disaster too terrible to think upon! How singular was the chance by which I discover'd that posthumous and important writing of Sir Andrew Adamant, address'd to me in his behalf, and which seem'd to have lain conceal'd for the sole purpose of bringing it to light in the happiest moment for his interest and advantage! The very case of that wretched maniac, from whose hands he snatch'd you, had a moral in the history of his madness, that applied itself to my conviction: but when to these I add, the very striking circumstances that attended his meeting with his father, and reflect upon his uncommon generosity in the case of Blachford's will, and again in that of Lady Crowbery, how can I say he is not deserving of your affection, or any longer interpose between him and the happiness he seems destin'd to enjoy?"

Here Sir Roger concluded, whilst his attentive hearer still waited in respectful silence; but perceiving after a pause that he now expected her reply, she turned upon him the most lovely countenance in nature, and—"Oh! my dear father," she said, "think not that I have been silent because I wanted gratitude for your goodness, but because
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I feel it to an excess that stifles my expressions. I trust I never cou'd act in opposition to your will; but I wou'd fain not entertain even a wish in contradiction to your judgment: had you therefore interdicted my attachment to Henry, I must, and I wou'd have strove to have torn him from my heart, terrible although the struggle would have been; but when I hear his praises from your lips, and receive your sanction to confirm me in my choice, words cannot speak the happiness you bestow upon me, and if I did not sooner make reply, it was because I was loth to interrupt you on a subject I cou'd listen to for ever."

In the mean time Henry, thus ever present to the thoughts of his Isabella, proceeded briskly towards the destination where his duty called him. New affections had been stirred within his bosom by the discovery of his parents; but hard fortune, which had already bereft him of a mother, lost as soon as known, and beloved only to be bewailed, seemed now in the cruel disposition to deprive him of his father also. This and his meditations on the dear object he had newly parted from, were his companions by the way, and honest Weevil, who followed him, had full scope to indulge his own imagination without let or hindrance, till our hero, having measured more than half the way, found himself at the inn, where Sir Roger proposed to take up his rest. Here he left Tom and his horses, and having delivered to the master of the house the necessary instructions for the reception of his guests next day, he took post and proceeded with all possible expedition towards Crowbery.

The day had closed when Henry arrived at Susan's hospitable door, and was received by Williams with a chearful countenance, that bespoke the happy report he had to make of his patient's amend-

amendment. Delapoer had quitted his sick chamber, and was sitting in the parlour; great was his joy at the sight of Henry, clasping him in his arms and blessing his good providence, that he had survived to see him once again; of his obligations to Williams, who had now for the second time rescued him from death, he spoke in the warmest terms, and not less gratefully of honest Ezekiel and the kind women, whose tender care and solicitude had contributed to restore him. He confessed the object of his journey had been a sudden resolution of seeking Lord Crowbery, in consequence of the objection started by Sir Roger Manstock, with respect to his projected mausoleum. "And what," added he, "might have been the consequence of our meeting, had it taken place, I will not presume to say; certain it is, that second thoughts and a calmer state of mind, have placed that project in another light from what it first appeared in to me, when under the impression of a recent disappointment: I have now renounced it, and think it a lucky circumstance, that the wretch I came in search of is out of my reach, and gone from home to prepare, as it is said, for a second marriage with a niece of Mr. Claypole, now residing at the castle."

"Unfeeling, shameless profligate," exclaimed Henry, with indignation and astonishment; "will he so grossly insult the virtuous memory of his injured wife, as to plot a second marriage before she is scarce cold in her coffin; and with the niece of Claypole wou'd he marry? Is Fanny Claypole of all women breathing to be the Lady Crowbery, that so hastily succeeds to my unhappy mother? be it so! if he is so rank of soul as to set decency at defiance, let him couple with a fury, and may his passion be his plague! I know her well, and if Providence

vidence for his sins shall surrender him into her hands, you and I, my good sir, may let our vengeance sleep; his punishment is provided for, the task is taken out of our hands, and the tyrant over others is his own executioner."

The evening was now in advance, and though Delapoer's spirits were greatly exhilarated by the arrival of his son, yet, in consideration of his strength, the conversation was not protracted beyond the time that Williams thought fit to indulge him with; and nothing more occurred between them worth recording in this history.

CHAPTER III.

A singular instance of a Journey performed by our Hero and Heroine, without one Casualty by the way.

AS soon as Delapoer had retired to his chamber, Susan May and her mother presented themselves to Henry, and were met by him with all the warmth of former affection. The good dame as usual was loquacious in her joy, and had many questions and enquiries to be resolved: Susan's sensibility was of a more silent sort, and whilst she greeted him with smiles of gratitude and love, the tear glistened in her eye, and the blush glowed upon her cheek.

Henry saw her emotion, and perfectly understood the cause of it, making a plea therefore of his impatience to see Ezekiel, he cut short the interview, observing, that the evening just served him to snatch a sight of his friend, over his concluding pipe, before he turned in to his cockloft.

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He proceeded to the cottage, and opening the door without ceremony, discovered the rural apostle seated in his chair of meditation, with his back towards him, and too deep in thought to be roused by so quiet a visitor. Henry stooped and contemplated him for a few moments, with a placid delight: "Kind soul," he said within himself, "thy thoughts are occupied in benevolence, and thy communications are with Heaven!" Then going up to him, and putting his hands upon his shoulders over the back of his wicker throne, called upon him by name, to wake from thought and welcome a friend. Ezekiel started at the well-known voice, sprung from his chair, and threw himself upon Henry's neck: "Praised be Heaven!" he exclaimed, "praised be Heaven! I am blest above my hopes in embracing thee once more, thou child of my affection." He then took two or three strides across the room, rubbing his hands and crying out; "What wilt eat? what wilt drink? I warrant thou art fasting, fresh from sea."

Henry smiled at Ezekiel's want of recollection, and stopping him as he was posting to the store where he kept his provisions, told him that the pleasure of seeing him was all the refreshment he stood in need of for the present. The good man now became a little more collected, but still ran from subject to subject, mistaking many things that he might have recollected, and repeating others Henry was already informed of; such as the death of Jemima Cawdle, the arrival of Williams, the reports about Lord Crowbery, and other anecdotes neither quite new, nor over-interesting in his relation of them; yet our hero had patience for them all, and in the end was repaid for that patience, by hearing that the wretched Jemima had, by Ezekiel's assiduous remonstrances, been brought to a
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due sense of her condition, and a better train of thoughts in her latter moments: what money she had scraped together, she bequeathed to her husband, and every thing in which Zachary was interested, had been faithfully and discreetly administered by Daw himself, with the assistance of old Tom Weevil the miller.

Ezekiel's spirits were now so thoroughly awake, that Henry would hardly have prevailed with him to think it was time to go to rest, had he not pretended that he stood in want of it himself. He found his friends at next door expecting his return, and every thing set in order for his comfort and repose, that Susan's hospitable care and attention could provide.

The next morning brought Williams to his bedside, with the cheering intelligence, that he could now with confidence pronounce his patient to be out of danger. His apprehensions thus allayed, he felt himself at liberty to make good his conditional engagement to Isabella, for which he made the necessary preparations. After devoting the whole forenoon to his father, and declining his generous offers of an immediate establishment, suitable to the heir of an ample fortune, he left him highly satisfied with the errand he was going upon, and much delighted with the happy prospect it seemed to open on his future hopes.

Relieved from his alarms about the friend he left behind him, and impatient to meet the beloved object towards whom his course was now directed, our hero with a joyful heart, whilst the chaise whirled him rapidly along, counted every mile that diminished his distance from Isabella. Sir Roger with the punctuality that governed all his motions, had calculated to a minuteness the time of his arrival at the inn. It was a full hour

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before this given time, when Henry's well-fed postilions drove their panting horses to the door. His first care was to examine if the house was in a state of preparation for their expected guests; and it was with satisfaction he saw, that all his instructions had been punctually obeyed; when this was done, and the little derangements of his dress repaired, he found himself at leisure to make the proper enquiries after Tom and his cavalry: the brave lad soon appeared upon the summons, and gave a good account of his charge; he also informed his master, that part of Sir Roger's suite were arrived, and that the coach was near at hand with all well within-side of it.

At length the much-wished-for moment arrived, that brought the cavalcade in view, and Henry at the coach-door received a hand in his, whose touch inspired him with delight. All inquiries made and resolved, Isabella now, with Henry seated beside her, all her fond fears dismissed, and greeted with the smile of approbation from her beloved father, felt that transcendent glow of soul, which is the exclusive property of virtuous love, and Heaven's best gift to the thrice-blessed few that merit it. No traces of her late disorder were any longer to be seen; her animated countenance beamed with such lustrous beauty, health and joy, as made it dazzling to behold. Henry gazed in speechless rapture; Sir Roger himself sat in fixed contemplation, and the very people who attended upon the guests, seemed to make errands into the room, for the purpose of treating themselves with a glimpse of the lovely stranger. Unconscious of her charms, until she saw them in the glass of Henry's face, she no sooner perceived the transport they excited, than she dropped her eyes with modest sensibility, and was covered with blushes.

Enraptured

Enraptured at the sight, Henry could no longer command himself, though in the presence of Sir Roger: "Pardon me," he cried, "thou loveliest of women, for oppressing thee with my admiration; and you my patron and protector, be my advocate so far, as to confess that her beauty is irresistible."—"Why in very truth, Henry" said the Baronet, "if you could look upon that form without rapture, I must think you would not be so worthy as you are of an interest in her heart."—"How generous is that apology!" exclaimed the happy youth; "how flattering to my presumptuous hopes! by Heaven, I would go to death for the father of my Isabella!"—"You have done more than that for me," replied Sir Roger, "when you preserved my child: she is, under Providence, your gift to me; what can I do less than endow you with that blessing you so gallantly redeemed?"

The gratitude and joy which Henry now felt, were not to be expressed by words: his first impulse was to throw himself at Sir Roger's feet: a motion on the part of that gentleman, which forbade the attempt, and a certain look, which reminded him of the place he was in, brought him to instant recollection; yet he seized his hand with ardour, and pressed it to his lips: Isabella's beauteous and blushing countenance in the meanwhile took a deeper tint; she too like Henry was silent. The good Baronet understood enough of nature to interpret rightly for both parties, and accordingly took an early occasion to relieve their sensations, by starting some topic more apposite to the place they were in; but a more effectual stop was soon put to all conversation on this subject, by the preparations for supper, and the bustle those manœuvres never fail to produce amongst the waiters of an inn. The joy, however, which

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our hero now experienced, was too discoverable to be overlooked by her who was the cause of it; how far her own sensations accorded with it, was only to be guessed at by the sagacity of a lover; for modest timidity kept in check all emotions that might lead to observation, and nature only shewed herself in a complacent smile, and now and then a tender glance, that escaped as it were involuntarily and by surprise.

Sir Roger, meanwhile, was in high good-humour with every body and every thing: exercise had given him appetite, and he had a heart to partake of the happiness he had bestowed; he declared his entertainment to be excellent, chatted familiarly with the landlord, praised his house, and promised never to pass it without a call. There is certainly something in an inn, which, by contrast with other scenes, is oftentimes found highly pleasing; it gives an ease and relaxation from those domestic attentions which, though they may not be irksome in general, are sometimes interruptions to occupations more amusing. It may be presumed Sir Roger felt it at this time, and we agree with him in the following remark—That the man who cannot find contentment in a decent English inn, is a sour unpleasant fellow, and a companion no one would wish to travel with.

Moments, passed thus happily, pass quickly, and our lovers found themselves summoned to their repose, before they were sensible of any wish for it. The next morning they were early stirring, for Sir Roger proposed reaching home by dinner-time, whilst Henry on horseback took a circuit by Crowbery, under promise of coming to Manstock House in the evening, if he found nothing to prevent him on his visit to his father. As far as to the point where his road branched off, he accompanied

Sir

Sir Roger and his beloved mistress; whose look at parting told him how unwelcome the moment was that carried him out of sight: from this intimation he very naturally inferred, that the interval of absence was not to be lengthened by his voluntary delay; no sooner, therefore, had he uttered the word 'Farewell!' than, giving the reins to his horse, he put him to a pace that made quick dispatch with the solitary remainder of his way.

He was welcomed by Williams on his return, with the same good news, and had the happiness to find his father advancing fast in his recovery. Williams was still sole manager in office, though Zachary was arrived. The good man was certainly not apt to undervalue his own abilities, but in this case he made no attempt to interpose his advice for any change of system, which probably would not have been accepted by Delapoer, from the first authority in England. As for Doctor Zachary Cawdle, Surgeon, Apothecary, and Man-Midwife, though his name and titles still glittered on the sky-blue scroll, that bestrode the posterns of his gate, yet had he now touched the happy period that closed his medical career, and delivered him bodily over to ease, indolence, and the gout for the rest of his days. The annuity devised by Lady Crowbery, and Jemima's bequest, made up a comfortable independency; and it was for the purpose only of introducing his successor into business with a better grace, that he kept his name in the firme; as to all money arrangements for stock in hand, good will, or any other description of particulars, Delapoer himself had so generously stood forward in that essential part of the negociation, that nothing was left to the chance and uncertainty of any after-reckoning between the contracting parties.

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Having thus disposed of our honest Doctor, we shall probably find little other occasion to call upon him, in the further progress of this history, except with our hearty good wishes for health and long life, to enjoy the tranquillity and repose, which his good fortune has provided for him.

As for Sawney Kinloch, he by his own choice seceded from the shop, and beat his retreat to his beloved town of Aberdeen, with a fortune which, reduced into Scotch pounds, made no contemptible display in his own country;—an example, amongst many others, of the very extraordinary things which close and persevering œconomy can effect.

CHAPTER IV.

*When Marriages are making, 'tis a sign the Drama
is drawing nigh to it's Catastrophe.*

WILLIAMS now found himself in condition to think seriously of matrimony, without the painful sensation of considering himself as the pensioner of a wife: Susan on her part had all due partiality for him, and there can be little doubt but he was satisfied with the proofs of it; yet the arrival of Henry was an incident of some importance, and the effects of it had been watched by Williams with all that attention, which wary lovers are apt to bestow upon a new-comer, whom they suspect to be in greater favour than themselves. Susan's deportment, however, had been such, that the result of this scrutiny had not been unfavourable

ble to her, or discouraging to her admirer: the same smile was reserved for Williams when they met in private; and if occasionally a cloud was seen to pass over her brow, or a sigh to escape from her bosom, the voice of love soon restored her to peace; he was therefore firmly bent upon rivetting the nuptial chain, yet a previous word or two with Henry, by way of preface to the awful deed, was anxiously sought by him; and as our hero's visits to his father were daily repeated, that opportunity soon offered itself; when the following dialogue took place.

"I have fully reflected," said Williams, "upon our friend Susan's situation in life, and I think I may say truly and without reserve, that my feelings are entirely reconciled to put up with the consequences of her involuntary connection with the father of her child. If my mind was not made up upon this point to a perfect acquiescence for all time to come, I would not do her, as well as myself, so base a wrong as to engage with her on any terms; but represented as the transaction has been to me, (and I cannot doubt the truth of it) she appears in heart so innocent, that I confess to you, Sir, I feel no hesitation in resolving to propose to her, and I trust I never shall find cause to blush at the connection."

"There is no ground to suspect you ever will," said Henry: "you was her first love, my friend, and she, I understand, was your's: a thief indeed stole in, and made some pillage of your treasure, but you yourself had first unlocked the chest."

"That's true, that's true," quoth Williams colouring, "I owe the debt of honour, and will pay it: yet give me leave to say, I suspect there will be a sort of blank in her heart for a while to come; but what of that? I must trust to her good sense and

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and my own attentions, to fill it up before long."

"And how can you doubt of either," rejoined Henry?—"I will not doubt," replied Williams, "nay, I do not doubt, for she has conducted herself hitherto in a manner to my perfect satisfaction, and it would be injustice to suppose she will fail me in future; nevertheless, if I am not asking too great a favour, and intruding on your kindness and condescension further than I ought, I confess it would be a very singular gratification to me, to know the state of her mind in these particulars from your examination and report of it."

To this Henry made answer, that he saw no reason to doubt of Susan's sincerity, neither was he convinced the method he proposed of putting it to the test was altogether adviseable. "Nevertheless," added he, "if you are resolved to put the probe in my hand, and insist upon my using it, as it is your profession to understand the application, so it must be your business to stand to the effects of it." Williams smiled, and replied he would abide by the consequences.

These words were scarce out of his mouth, when Susan entered the room; and Williams, glancing a significant look at Henry, left them together. A leading kind of conversation was started by Henry on the subject of her little boy under his charge, which he contrived to train towards the point he had in purpose to discuss.—"I think, Susan," he said, "as business will gather upon your hands with the growth of your child, it might not be amiss to look out in good time for some honest and well-tempered man to be your partner in the task." Susan blushed, but at the same time had a certain arch intelligence in her look, whilst she smiled upon him, that gave him to understand she was aware at whom
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his introduction pointed.—“I see you are beforehand with me,” said Henry, “but if I am touching upon an unwelcome topic, tell me so with sincerity, and I’ll say no more; but if I am still as much in your confidence as I used to be, and you are not disinclined to open your mind to your friend, why should we not discuss this subject together as naturally as any other? and surely none can be more interesting and important.”

“Certainly,” replied Susan, “none can be so interesting to a person in my circumstances, nor have I any friend on earth, to whose opinion I shall attach so much attention and respect as to your’s: yet I know not how, nor ought I perhaps, if I knew how to describe the sensation it gives me, to find myself addressed by you on this subject. In every matter I can lay my heart before you without scruple or reserve, in this only I feel a backwardness and repugnance, which ought not to be there, nor shall it be, if my utmost efforts can prevent it; therefore I humbly pray you to proceed, and if I misbehave myself by any sudden weakness I am not able to controul, let me rather meet your pity than incur your displeasure or contempt.”

“Fear not,” replied Henry, “that you can possibly be exposed to either one or the other, nor suffer yourself to believe I have any motives but those of the purest friendship for pressing this unwelcome explanation upon you. You and I, Susan, have been in certain situations, for which I must remain your everlasting debtor in gratitude, and in the course of which the benevolent warmth and sensibility of your heart have been so far interested in my favour, that I feel myself in such a degree responsible for your happiness and secure establishment in life, as to make it a matter of conscience

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science with me, to see you settled and content, before I can enjoy with perfect peace of mind the happiness I myself have so flattering a prospect of. You have known my friend Williams longer than I have, and I need not speak to you of his worth; as little need I say that he loves you to the length of marrying you."

Here Susan demanded if Williams had said that voluntarily, and of his own accord, or if Henry had urged him to it, in consequence of any thing that had been talked of in confidence between them. To this Henry replied, "I am free to confess to you, that all I have to tell him he already knows; but as I have had nothing to tell, except what makes for your credit and recommendation, he views your character in its best and fairest light: a soft side perhaps towards the tender passion he may credit you for, but of me he has no right to be jealous, and for himself he has no reason either to glance at what has past, or apprehend for what may be to come. A handsome fellow at all points as he is, can have nothing to fear from an honest-hearted girl like you, whose very first lesson of love was of his teaching."—Susan cast her eyes down, and blushed. Henry proceeded, "He is now established in a profession, where his diligence and skill will ensure success: what can you better determine upon than to join your means with his, and fix for life with an amiable and worthy man, who has a heart to love you, an understanding to advise you, and a spirit that will protect and uphold you under all events of life?"

"Thank you for your good counsel," replied Susan, keeping her eyes fixt on the floor; "I have a great opinion of Mr. Williams, but——"; here she paused, "if you are so condescending as to be his advocate in this matter, you will advise

him not to talk to me on the subject for some two or three days to come."

"I understand you," said Henry; and rightly judging that a longer pleading would not help his client, hastened out of the room,

CHAPTER V.

Some of the Principal Characters in this History are winding up their Parts.

WHEN our hero had concluded his conference with Susan, he repaired to his father, and had the satisfaction to hear him say he found himself so well recovered, that he proposed, with Williams's permission, to accept Sir Roger Manstock's kind invitation, and pay him a visit the very next day. If our reader has not heard of this invitation, we have his pardon to solicit, as well as that of the hospitable Baronet, for our neglect to record it. At the bottom of the stairs, as he came down from his father's room, he was met by old Weevil, who came to return thanks for his kindness to his son: Tom was now returned home, to the great joy of his family, who contemplated his scars with triumph, and heard his tale with rapture and delight. His father proposed to him to take on with the trade of the mill, and Sir Roger Manstock had offered to put him into a small farm, but Tom was a lad of an enterprising spirit, and in his short cruize had contracted a passion for the sea. The cut in his skull had not cooled the courage at his heart, and a sea-faring life was so decidedly his choice, that Captain Carey, at the suit of our hero, had

had promised him employment: And as we are now more at leisure to attend to his particular history than we shall probably be when nearer to the conclusion of our general one, we shall take the opportunity of informing our readers by anticipation, that Thomas Weevil, through Carey's interest, obtained the lucrative employ of purser to his frigate; and in the course of a successful warfare, earned enough to provide a comfortable retreat for himself in time of peace.

Henry's conversation with the Miller was cut short by a more consequential visitor; his late antagonist, Captain Crowbery, was in the parlour, and requested a few words with him in private. He understood Mr. Delapoer had intended his noble relation the honour of a visit, when he was taken suddenly ill; that his Lordship was now from home, and in his absence he wished Mr. Delapoer to be informed, that if the business was such as he could execute, or was thought worthy to be entrusted with, he should gladly receive his commands.

Henry made answer, that from what he understood of Mr. Delapoer's mind on the subject, he had no present wish of troubling Lord Crowbery or any of the family upon the business in question; it simply related to a design which he had laid aside: at all events, it did not apply to him, the Captain, and if it should be taken up afresh, he presumed Lord Crowbery would be at home again in a few days. To this the Captain replied, he was sorry to say that was not likely to be the case, as he must confess it was not a very honourable way he had taken of terminating a rash engagement, by running away from it: it could not be denied that Miss Claypole was unfairly treated, for matters had gone great lengths,

and now my Lord had taken leave of her in a very abrupt fashion, by going out of England without any warning, either to her or to her uncle, who accompanied him to town upon the pretence of arranging matters for the marriage: that Mr. Claypole was now come back, having had a letter put into his hand after his Lordship's departure, in which he avows his resolution of discharging himself from his engagements upon prudential reasons; and says he has probably taken leave of England for some years to come.—“I have sought occasion of telling you this,” added he, “because I would fain stand clear in your opinion as to my part in the transaction, which is simply that of being left here in a most unpleasant predicament; the nearest relation of a man, whose conduct I cannot approve, but whose interests at the same time I must not abandon. My situation will, I trust, apologize for this; and I protest to you, upon my honour, I have not been his Lordship's adviser in the proceeding. I should have expected that decency alone would have kept him out of an engagement so unseemly and precipitate. Whilst that affair was carrying on, I was banish'd from the castle, to which I am but just recall'd, there to be left in trust of his concerns, with the distressful aggravation of being made witness to a scene, that beggars all description. And now, having trespass'd on your patience with a detail little interesting perhaps to you, I have only to add, that if Mr. Delapoer, as your friend, has any thing to propose within the compass of my power to gratify him in, I shall be happy in the opportunity of shewing my regard to you, by the attention I shall pay to his commands.”

“Captain Crowbery,” said our hero, “I am much beholden to you for the kindness of this offer.

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The candour with which you mark a conduct, that cannot be justified by any principle of honour, leaves me nothing to add to your comments on that proceeding. I am sorry for the lady; but as I suspect no other passion but ambition has part in the disappointment, I hope she will the sooner forget it. With regard to her uncle, I am afraid it is not in my heart to find much pity for his mortification: in the mean time, Sir, I shall impart to Mr. Delapoer the very handsome manner you have express'd yourself in towards him, and I doubt not but he will be duly sensible of your politeness."

This said, Captain Crowbery took his leave, and in a few minutes after, whilst Henry was sitting alone pondering on these events, to his unspeakable surprize, the door was thrown open, and Fanny Claypole herself, without any previous ceremony, hastily and wildly burst into the room.

"I was resolv'd," she cried, "to see you once more for the last time; and if you have any pity in your heart for an injur'd woman, you will not refuse to hear me. That monster Crowbery, that murderer of his wife, has assassinated my reputation; but I have found out his hiding-place, and I am setting out this moment in pursuit of him: villain as he is, he shall rue my vengeance. After the most seducing promises, the most sacred vows to marry me, he has fled from his engagements out of England; and before I follow him, persuaded it will never be my fate to see you more, I cannot go in peace till I have declar'd to you my contrition, and implor'd your forgiveness: Oh! Henry, there is one moment of my life I must never cease to think upon without horror! Thank Heaven you surviv'd it! I was mad and desperate to destroy you."

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“ Say no more of it,” replied our hero, “ banish it from your memory, as I shall bury it in silence; and be assur’d I cordially forgive you.”— “ I know,” said she, “ you are capable of every thing that is great and noble, and I implore of Heaven to reward you in the arms of the best and most beautiful of her sex, your beloved Isabella: I only lov’d you; she loves, approves and deserves you.”— “ I have heard,” resumed he, “ how basely you have been treated; but what else cou’d you expect from such a wretch? So far from allowing you ought to regret his flight as a misfortune, it appears to me you shou’d rejoice in it, as an escape out of the hands of a villain, which, to a lady in your situation, is a most providential rescue.”

“ Ah! Henry,” she replied, “ it is my situation that makes him a villain, and the worst of villains; but I repeat to you that I will not be injur’d with impunity; and when you hear of me again, you shall hear I am reveng’d. England I shall never visit more; and now, before we part for ever, if you are sincere in your forgiveness of me, you will hear with favour this my last request. My uncle, poor deluded man, is broken-hearted on his own and my account; he repents from his soul his ingratitude to Sir Roger Manstock, and his enmity to you; he justly despairs of regaining your lost opinions; but as he has no where to resort but to his residence at Manstock, he ardently solicits your good offices to secure him such a reception on his return, as may encourage him to resume his functions with some degree of comfort, and not entirely disgrace him in the eyes of his parishioners. When I am gone, his situation will be sad indeed; my indiscretion, and his own ambition, have destroy’d his peace;
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your benevolence may preserve him from absolute despair. Have you the magnanimity to extend it to him, and return good for ill?—I am satisfied you have.”

“I hope,” replied Henry, “we both are capable of returning good for ill. No one, who ever tasted that transport, can regret the sacrifice of such a direful passion as revenge. The virtue of forgiveness is in its own nature so lovely, so congenial to man, that if it had not been prescrib’d to us as a duty, we shou’d have practis’d it as an indulgence. When we are instructed to forgive our enemies, knowing them to be such, it is a precept, that does not take away our sense of injuries, it only abridges us of the privilege of revenging them; and you, who swell with rage against the wretch that has betray’d you, who threaten to pursue him with your vengeance, tell me, is it a pleasurable sensation you now nourish in your heart? Would it not be a happy reformation, were it possible, to change the tempest into a calm with the word of power? Religion has that power, mercy can speak that word; she can breathe peace into your bosom, and purify the heart in which she dwells, till nothing evil can approach it—mercy is that virtue, which offers opportunity to all; for who is there that has not something to forgive, although he may have nothing to bestow? ’Tis general as the sun; no solitude can exclude its emanation. Cast me upon a desert coast, an exile from society, where animated nature does not draw the breath of life, still I can find some object to engage my care; the plant that feebly vegetates for want of soil, the rill that struggles for a clearer channel, will demand my help; and mercy, like heaven’s general dew, shall fall upon the naked earth, though not an insect that has life be present to partake of it.”

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"I must not hear you on this subject," cried the relentless damsel; "my nerves are brac'd to the undertaking; my wrongs will not be reason'd with, my heart pants for revenge; the intercession of an angel cou'd not shake me from my purpose. Farewell for ever!"—With this terrible denunciation, she sprung out of the room, leaving our hero to pursue his fruitless meditations by himself.

CHAPTER VI.

*When the Judge is in League with the Advocate,
'tis easy to predict the Issue of the Suit.*

THE scene last recorded made so deep an impression on the sensibility of our Henry, that when he returned to Manstock House in the evening, the effect was so discoverable, that he found it necessary to impart to the enquiring Isabella what had caused it. When he had finished his recital, which, though not coloured to the height, was sufficiently horrible to account for what she had remarked, she produced a letter, that day received from the unhappy object of their conversation, wherein she takes shame to herself for her conduct towards Henry, and paints his character in the highest terms of praise: she speaks of Lord Crowbery as a wretch too base to live, and takes a final leave of Isabella, with the warmest wishes for her happiness; recommending, as her last petition, her repentant uncle to pardon and protection, and entreating her to employ her generous efforts

efforts for mitigating the just resentment of Sir Roger. "There is justice, at least," said Isabella, "in this poor creature's heart, tho' it is the slave of passion and revenge. Alas! I fear she is desperate enough to execute any dreadful act she meditates; but what is to be done with this poor deluded uncle of her's, whom she recommends to our pity? Methinks it wou'd be hard to refuse him that, now he has seen his error, and smarts for it so severely. It cannot be expected my father shou'd ever entertain the same affection for him as before, nor is it, perhaps, to be wish'd he shou'd; but I think I may answer for it that he will never strew him any marks of his resentment. I am told he came early to the vicarage this morning, and no doubt it is a heavy moment with him, whilst he is uncertain what reception he will meet from this family, by whose notice or neglect all the parishioners will govern themselves. Poor man! he wants a comforter: I know the tenderness of your heart, Henry, and I wish you cou'd prevail upon yourself to pay him a charitable visit."—"May all your wishes be as readily anticipated!" replied Henry; "I have done that already."—"Have you?" she exclaimed; "how like yourself is such benevolence! I cannot tell you, Henry, what delight I take in every thing that does you honour; but what is that but saying every action of your life diffuses pleasure to your friends?"—"That praise is more than I deserve," said Henry; "for I really fought my own gratification in visiting Mr. Claypole, who is so much an alter'd man, that I got rid of some unpleasant impressions I had receiv'd in his disfavour; and when a man has the good sense, to see and candidly to confess his errors, so far from being lessen'd in my opinion, he seems to me a more amiable character than before he

had committed them.”—“I dare say I shou’d think as you do,” replied Isabella, “if I did not recollect there is one person in the world who has never taken that method to encrease my good opinion of him.”—“That only proves your partiality is greater than your memory,” rejoined Henry, looking tenderly upon her; “but whilst my whole heart is your’s, and every thought which it conceives is inspir’d by the ambition of approving myself to you, following that impulse, how is it possible I shou’d err?”—“Ah, flatterer!” she replied, “if my approbation is your object, that is long since obtain’d.”—In saying this she yielded him her hand, whilst her enraptured lover, pressing it to his lips, dropt on his knee at her feet: “And may I not,” he said, “presume, upon that approbation, to solicit the surrender of this lovely hand for life? When will the charming Isabella deign to bless her fond devoted suppliant, whom she has condescended so to praise and honour above all that he can merit? Oh! when will that soft heart, so full of pity, yield to my intercession, and consent to shorten my suspense? How many anxious days have I to number betwixt hope and happiness?”—“Days!” she exclaimed, “what are you thinking of?”—“Of you, the first in all my thoughts, the fairest loveliest object in creation; of myself next, the wretchedest of beings, if, after a few weeks, I must be doom’d to bear the pangs of separation from all that is dear to me in life.”—“And why of separation?” she demanded; “my father, it is true, will be call’d up to town at the meeting of Parliament, but you will be with us, Henry; I am sure my father does not mean to part with you: Don’t you perceive he is never happy without you?”

“He is very good to me,” he replied; “but still I cannot look forward to that time without alarm.

alarm. London is my terror: what can I do in it? I have never been in the habits of a London life, nor can I accord to them. Adieu to the soft shades of Manstock, and our delightful walks beneath them! Farewell our peaceful evenings, undisturb'd by noise, uninterrupted by intruders! No more morning rides, amidst flocks and herds and cultivated farms, to visit the improvements of the husbandman and the works of the labourer: no peaceful cottager will be standing at her door to greet my Isabella with a blessing as she passes; no infant children cloath'd by her bounty, no aged objects feeding on her bread; all tranquil pleasures will vanish, and, perhaps, the very senses themselves change with the scene that shifts before them: the eye may lose its purity of speculation, the ear its chaste abhorrence of unmeaning folly or insidious flattery; and the heart, surpriz'd by novelty and sapp'd by dissipation, may in time be perverted from its simplicity; and these venerable towers, the seat of hospitality and peace, when visited again, may present nothing to the imagination but the gloomy haunts of solitude and melancholy."

"Heavens! what a picture," she exclaimed; "but can these fearful predictions be realiz'd? No, Henry, I have been train'd to domestic habits, and to them I will adhere. My duty leads me to attend upon my father, and to that alone I will devote myself: you shall never have to seek me at public places and assemblies: we will pass our evenings at home, and hold to the old fashions of Manstock House, till it is our happy destiny to return to it again, and then you shall witness if my spirits sink upon the sight of it!"—"Wou'd to Heaven that day was come!" rejoined Henry, with a sigh; "or that my adorable Isabella wou'd be graciously

graciously dispos'd to save me from those agonies that parting must inflict."—"Again you talk of parting; where is the necessity for that?"—"Because I am a son, he replied; "and have as yet no nearer, no superior, duty to oppose to nature's call upon me. Can I desert my father in his declining state? His melancholy station, as you know, is fixt, and nothing can allure him from it: how then can I acquit myself to conscience, and be justified to him, unless my lovely advocate will furnish me with a plea to put to silence all opposing claims? Can the most generous of her sex reflect that she has power to bless me with a word, and will she not pronounce it?"

He accompanied this appeal with a look so touching, and action so tender, that the fond and unopposing Isabella was disarmed and vanquished. The dread of separation on the one hand, and the impulse of all-powerful love on the other, conspired to second and enforce his suit. As she meditated upon a reply, her colour came and went, as alternate emotions succeeded one another: delicacy suggested some repelling thoughts; the recent death of Lady Crowbery opposed a strong impediment to hasty measures; but then she called to mind two months were yet to pass before her father would be called from home, and then the same objections of decorum would not remain in the same force. She perceived that every hour improved her lover's interest with Sir Roger, and in two long months there were many hours to mature that interest, till what was Henry's wish might be her father's also, and then her precipitation would not stand in need of an excuse. In short, these same intervening months were such a resource in her reasonings upon this petition, and love is so ingenious to avail himself of every resource

source against hesitation and delay, that she did not feel herself necessitated to quash his hopes by a peremptory refusal; but on the contrary, turning her eyes upon him with a smile that would have animated any heart which had not totally forborne to beat, and blushing with a consciousness that she was to speak upon a subject that awakened all her sensibility, she said she hoped he was more ingenious than sincere in stating an alternative to puzzle her poor wits, and make a choice of difficulties, so artfully devised, that she could only say he had found that one circumstance to alarm her with, more terrible on reflection than all she had to dread by yielding to his importunity. —“ Oh, Henry!” added she, her sweet voice trembling and sinking into tones the most tender, “ it is plain you know the power you have upon my heart, when you menace me with a separation I have not fortitude to bear, and represent yourself in affliction and distress of mind, which you tell me is in my power to relieve you from with a single word, convinc’d, as you must be, there is no sacrifice I wou’d not make to purchase your release. If in this streight, therefore, you are resolv’d to hem me in by terrors on both sides, I freely own I have not the heart to make you wretched, and do not want the courage to resort to that alternative, which takes the inquietude from you, and fixes it on me alone.”

Henry replied to this with such respectful, but impressive tenderness, and though his heart overflowed with gratitude, he tempered it with such delicacy, that before their interesting conversation was concluded, every objection Isabella’s timidity had opposed was removed, and her fond heart became so complete a convert to the rhetoric of love, that when they broke up their conference,

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it would have been hard to decide, could their secret thoughts have been discovered, which of the two was most impatient for the happy moment that was to unite them for life.

CHAPTER. VII.

Occurrences upon a Visit at Manstock House.

THE next morning Henry rode over to Crowbery, and found his father preparing himself for his visit to Sir Roger Manstock. It was a bold experiment, but his heart was so much bent upon the undertaking, that Williams no longer opposed it. At the hour appointed Sir Roger's horses came over, and Delapoer stepped gaily into his chaise, after taking a most grateful leave of the hospitable women and honest Ezekiel, who were assembled on the occasion, and with many kind wishes attended him to the carriage. The day seemed to smile upon his enterprize, and he arrived at the gates of the venerable mansion with strength and spirits recruited by the freshness of the air and the gentle exercise which the vehicle had given him. On the first step before the door the worthy Baronet received his visitor, and welcomed him with that hospitable grace which was peculiarly his own. As he entered the stately hall, through two files of domestics ranged on each side, he was struck with a peculiar delight, in contemplating a scene that so strongly contrasted every thing his eyes had of late been accustomed to, and carried his imagination back through centuries

centuries past to the times of feudal state and chivalry. He seemed never weary of praising and admiring every thing he saw, nor was Sir Roger backward in explaining every object of his curiosity; he knew the owners of each shield and corselet, had the history of their battles by heart, could point out their portraits in the picture-gallery, and elucidate every banner and bearing of the family coat; to all which Delapoer, who was an adept in heraldry, gave a willing and attentive ear.

In the midst of this discourse, when Sir Roger had brought down his narrative so near to modern times as to be just then engaged in relating an anecdote of his great grandmother, very much to the credit of her beauty, Delapoer's attention was drawn off by the entrance of Isabella, in whose person he beheld a living model of such exquisite perfection, that he could not resist whispering to the Baronet, that whatever might have been the charms of the ancestor, he was persuaded they were outdone by those of the descendant. Sir Roger smiled, and probably was not displeased with the apostrophe, though he still seemed unwilling to give up his great grandmother—murmuring, in an under voice, that he could assure him Lady Rachel was a famous woman in her time. Isabella's manners were of that natural and engaging sort, that all the graces which others gain by study, she seemed to possess to a superior degree by the gift of nature: how then could she fail to charm a man of Delapoer's sensibility, who at the same time recognized in her fine person a family likeness of that beloved image which sad remembrance had indelibly impressed upon his mind? His figure, though in decay, had still a grace and high-born elegance about it, which neither lapse of
years

years in a debilitating climate, nor the more fatal inroads of corroding melancholy, could so efface, but that there still remained the venerable ruin of a noble form. His address, though certainly not that of the present æra, was not so stiffened by oriental forms as to be troublesomely ceremonious; it had all the gallantry and good-breeding of the old court, with some slight tints, perhaps, of its pedantry and precision: this, in Sir Roger's eye, was the very model of a fine gentleman, and no instruments in unison ever harmonized more perfectly than the good host and his guest.

Sir Roger's stile, as we before observed, was, in point of open hospitality, that of the feudal ages, and his return to Manstock brought a great resort of the neighbouring gentry to his house, where the board might literally be said to groan with plenty; but the most interesting spectacle to Delapoer was that of the domestics at their dinner, ranged at three distinct tables, according to their gradations and degrees. "This is true magnificence," he cried; "this is a princely manner of administering a great estate." Some venerable personages at the head of the garrison particularly struck him; when a grey-headed senior, who presided at the upper table, giving a signal for silence, rose from his seat, and lifting a can to his lips, proclaimed aloud, "*Prosperity to the House of Manstock!*" which was repeated by all with the like action, and in the like posture; whereupon, the libation being finished, the whole company broke up, and dispersed to their several occupations and employs.

In the great parlour, where Sir Roger entertained his guests, Delapoer was much amused by the series of family portraits, exhibiting curious specimens of characters and dresses in the several fashions of their times; whilst the Gothic windows

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of painted glass reflected variegated gleams of the prismatic colours, which played upon the faces of the company with a singular and whimsical effect: Zachary Cawdle in particular, who was one at the table, sat directly in the stream of so broad a glare of crimson light, that he exhibited a most ferocious and resplendent mask of foil, that would not have discredited the hue of Bacchus himself in the gayest of his frolics.

When the ladies had retired, after dinner, something was said of Lord Crowbery by a gentleman who sat next to Henry. He might have known it was a topic not very acceptable or polite at Sir Roger's table; and as he seemed going into an account of his attachment to Miss Claypole, Henry, in a whisper, reminded him that there were some present who would be thankful to him if he would change the subject he was upon. The young man was proud, ill-mannered, and irritable; he took Henry's hint as an affront, and turning to him with an indignant look, said, in a tone that marked his purpose to be heard by every body round him, "I don't know how I have deserved your reprimand, Sir, nor by what right I am stopt in my speech, when I was neither addressing it to you, nor about to speak disrespectfully of Lord Crowbery, to whom I have the honour of being related, and for whom I entertain a very high regard and esteem."

All eyes were instantly upon the angry gentleman; Sir Roger was preparing to interpose, and Delapoer had drawn himself up into a martial attitude, when our hero with the most perfect composure, not elevating his voice, nor retorting the acrimonious tone in which he had been addressed, replied, that he was not aware of his connection with Lord Crowbery, but since that was the case, he

he would compromise the matter without any further interruption to the company—"For, if you, Sir," added he, "will be pleased to say nothing more as to your opinion of his Lordship, I will be perfectly silent as to mine."—"You will do well, Sir," replied Mr. Hardham (for that was the name of the speaker) "to be silent in this and every other company, where that noble Lord is named."—Then rising from his seat, he said—"With your leave, Sir Roger, we will adjourn to the ladies."—"Hold, Sir," cried Henry, "we are both at issue before this good company, and if either of us has received an insult, let him that gave it deliver an apology: if there is here one gentleman, that pronounces me in fault, I am instantly prepared to make atonement on the spot."—"No, no, no!" was echoed by every voice; and one gentleman added, that he dare say Mr. Hardham would apologize.—"If that is your opinion," he replied, "you will be pleased to tell me, in the first place, for what I am to apologize, and next to whom, for to this moment I never heard what name the gentleman chuses to be addressed by."—"By mine," replied Delapoer, "by a name which he inherits as my son, and by which he is intitled to exact satisfaction from any gentleman that has the hardiness to insult him."

These words were calmly, though pointedly delivered; Mr. Hardham paused for a few moments, then addressing himself to Mr. Delapoer, said—"I am answered; and from what I felt as a relation of Lord Crowbery, can allow for what you must feel as so much nearer allied to this gentleman; to you therefore, as his father, I refer myself implicitly, and whatever you in your candour think proper to dictate, that I will repeat."—"Then, Sir,"

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replied Delapoer, " I can be at no loss to pronounce ; you have already said enough, and all I have further to wish for my son is, that he may have the honour and happiness of being better known to you."

Thus, by the timely application of a few patient words, an altercation was put a stop to, which threatened fatal consequences, for Mr. Hardham was a young man of a very forward spirit, and had more than once been engaged in what are called affairs of honour ; he had withal a full sense of his own consequence, being a man of great property in the county, son of the lately deceased member, and the very person whom his party meant to have set up as candidate, had not Sir Roger met the wishes of the coalition, and prevented a contest. His petulance nobody wondered at, for that was habitual to him ; how he came to be so right-headed in getting out of the quarrel, was matter of welcome surprise to every body ; but there was a latent motive, which operated upon him for curbing his temper in the presence of Sir Roger ; and it was not so much the firm words of Delapoer, as the fair eyes of Isabella, that were the peace-makers on this occasion : he had watched her during the entertainment, her manners charmed him, her beauty enchanted him ; but there was something in her looks at times, that directed his suspicion towards the person of our hero ; and this, together with a report, that had reached his ears, of an attachment in that quarter, threw a spark of jealousy upon the combustibles of his frame, which accounts for the explosion that so suddenly took place : the event, however, shews that this quarrelsome gentleman, like others of the like quality, had temper at command, when it suited him to make use of it.

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Few thing could have given greater pain to the hospitable heart of Sir Roger Manstock, than to have had the peace and good order of society disturbed beneath the sacred protection of his roof: the harmony that now succeeded, was of course grateful to him above all, and he spared no pains to convince Mr. Hardham of this by repeated marks of the most pointed attention. After a few chearful and conciliatory glasses, it was again proposed to adjourn to the drawing room: here the pacified gentleman had a fair opportunity of renewing his attentions to the lovely Isabella, without any interruption from Henry, now closeted with his friend Williams, who had galloped over from Crowbery, to impart the glad tidings of his approaching nuptials with his fair betrothed, who had consented to yield (what alone she had withheld) her hand in marriage on the day but one next ensuing. Henry was truly rejoiced at the news, but put as much gravity into his features as the felicity of the occasion would admit of: all which Williams, who read his thoughts, understood without a comment. Mr. Delapoeer was likewise called into conference, not only for the purpose of congratulation, but to undergo certain medical interrogatories, that Williams had to put to him; all which were discussed to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, for nothing was now wanting but gentle exercise and cautious regimen on the patient's part to confirm his recovery, and thereby establish the professional fame of the bridegroom elect.

CHAPTER VIII.

A certain Gentleman repeats his Visit.

WHEN Henry returned to the drawing-room, he found nobody there but the father and daughter; the company were all gone, and Mr. Hardham

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Hardham the last. His attention to Isabella had been so marked, that when, upon taking leave of Sir Roger, he begged permission to wait on him the next morning, upon an affair of consequence, there was little doubt to be made but that it had respect to Isabella. This was conveyed to Sir Roger in a whisper, as he passed through the hall to his carriage; and the Baronet had now been imparting it to his daughter, with his comments upon it to the above effect: her own observations also coincided with the same idea, and the point was not long in debate what should be the nature of the answer to the proposal, if it came; for, independent of all prior engagements, Mr. Hardham had not the happy faculty of recommending himself to the good graces of either party: Sir Roger, indeed acknowledged that his pretensions were unexceptionable in point of fortune and family, but he thought him of a proud imperious nature; and when he came to reflect upon his behaviour at table towards Henry, he thought he could discover other motives for his acquiescence than what resulted from pure candour and conviction. Isabella said, she had never found herself so embarrassed by the attentions of any man in her life, his whole address seemed artificially put on to cover a character and temper very different from what he assumed; but of all the persecutions she ever suffered, by being looked out of countenance, none was to be compared with what his eyes had the faculty of inflicting, when she found them for ever fixt upon her; in short, throwing all comparisons out of the question, Mr. Hardham was positively, in her opinion, the most unpleasant man she had ever met with.

In this period of their discourse Henry entered the room; and related what had passed between him and Williams. A new subject was now started,

ted, and of a pleasanter nature: Henry spoke in the highest terms of Williams, and as his father was now retired to his chamber for the night, he gave an account of all he had done for Williams, and how he had adjusted matters with Zachary on his behalf, by which he had set him out clear in the world, with a fair prospect of success in his profession, and of a happy connection with the girl of his heart, now comfortably established. Isabella asked if he was fully apprised of Susan's history. Henry assured her, he was acquainted with every particular of it, and had little difficulty in reconciling himself to circumstances, more imputable to ill-treatment than misconduct.—“And was Susan very readily consenting to the match? had she no scruples to overcome? was she wholly and solely attach'd to Williams?”—Henry smiled, and turning to Sir Roger said, that he appealed to the court if these were questions he was bound to answer.—“I can understand,” replied the worthy magistrate, “that they are questions you wish to evade; however, as Susan was her own mistress, and under no controul, we must suppose she had good reasons for the choice she has made; and I think Isabella herself will allow that is a fair conclusion.”

Mr. Hardham was mentioned, and Henry, in a kind of whisper, asked Sir Roger if he did not think it wou'd be right for him to pay that gentleman the compliment of a visit the next morning. Sir Roger answered that he should have thought so, but that Mr Hardham had signified his intention of coming over to Manstock; and if he conjectured rightly of his business, the ceremony of a visit might very well be dispensed with. Henry took the hint, cast a tender look upon Isabella's blushing countenance, and immediately gave a

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turn to the conversation, by speaking of Mr Claypole: he had been with him that morning, and found him in great affliction, on account of a letter he had received from his niece, by which it appeared she had taken the desperate resolution, of pursuing her base deceiver out of England, and was then on the point of embarking in a packet for that purpose. "Is the girl mad," said Sir Roger, "to run after a rascal that any other woman wou'd think herself happy to be rid of? what can she propose to gain by such a crazy expedition?"—"Revenge," cried Henry, "if I am to believe her own professions; and if I may judge from the frantic menaces she vented against him when she surpriz'd me with a visit at Susan May's, I wou'd not ensure his Lordship's ribs from a stiletto, if once he falls within her reach."—"A wretched catastrophe truly," cried Sir Roger, "that wou'd be, but a striking moral for tyrants: Mr. Hardham will then have to mourn the loss of his respected friend and relation, and this misguided this unhappy man, poor Claypole, will bring his politics to a miserable end; 'tis ever thus with over-cunning men."—"But he has thoroughly repented of his ingratitude," said Isabella, "and is now a real object for your pity and forgiveness."—"He is welcome to them both," rejoined Sir Roger, "and to every thing that I can subscribe to his consolation and relief; but what I cannot command, my affection and esteem, them I have not in my power to bestow; when once ingratitude has chill'd the heart that glowed with friendship, who can kindle it afresh? I speak strongly and explicitly to you, my dear children, upon this subject, because I know that both Henry upon this occasion, and you, Isabella, upon others as well as this, have purposely introduced it with
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a kind design of reinstating Claypole in my good opinion, by setting forth his sufferings and contrition: the attempt does honour to your hearts: 'tis amiable in the extreme, and I rejoice that you are capable of being advocates for one, that was no advocate for you, but artfully abused my confidence, and turned what interest he had in me (and that I own was not a little) insidiously against you both. Baffled in this project and disappointed of his malice, he betook himself to a wretch, whose very name is poison to my ears, and there began an infamous cabal, which having ended in miscarriage and disgrace, he now repents of; but remember, children, it is repentance after punishment, and therefore, when I say that I forgive him, I have said enough;—I have nothing more to do with Mr Claypole."

To this no answer was attempted, and probably from this time till certain circumstances, hereafter recorded, came to light, neither Henry nor Isabella felt in themselves any disposition to revive the subject. Claypole in the mean time kept himself retired from all society, except when Henry occasionally paid him a charitable visit, or Sir Roger cheered him with a civil word, which every Sunday he took care to address to him after divine service, in the sight of the congregation.

The next morning came, and Sir Roger was observed to be more than ordinarily thoughtful during breakfast: his mind was occupied with the expectation of his unwelcome visitor. When he had reflected upon what had fallen from him at table, where he was interrupted by Henry, he called to mind so many unpleasant marks of a purposed affront, so much arrogance in his manner, and such indications of a suppressed resentment, even in the very act of atoning for his insult, that

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he was not without suspicion that the flame of his temper would find some other vent, if upon the presumption of his proposing for Miss Manstock, he was to meet him with an instant and abrupt refusal. On this account he was not a little perplexed how to deport himself in the conference, so as neither to irritate him against Henry as a rival, nor encourage him to consider Isabella as a lady he was warranted to pursue with his addresses; and the whole result of Sir Roger's meditations amounted only to this, that he had a clearer sight of his difficulty than of the way to lead him out of it. It was therefore not a little to be regretted, that before he had gained any distinct perception of the line he was to follow, Mr. Hardham was announced, and of course immediately admitted to a private conference.

Mr. Hardham prefaced his more material business, by apologizing for words that had escaped from him yesterday, in the heat of conversation, which, as far as they alluded to Lord Crowbery, he feared might have conveyed an impression in his disfavour, as seeming to imply that he approved of his Lordship's conduct in general, when in fact he only alluded to that part of his character, which was uppermost in his thoughts, the steady support which he had always given to the county interests of his family: that he was then apprised of the just reasons Sir Roger had to resent his treatment of an amiable lady, unfortunately lost to the world; neither was he informed of the late disgraceful step he had taken, of flying from engagements, which though rashly made could not be honourably abandoned;—these circumstances, he confessed, had been candidly explained to him that very morning by Captain Crowbery; and it was but fair to say, that upon that statement he felt himself obliged to

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give up his noble relation as indefensible on both accounts; and this he hoped would suffice to set him strait in Sir Roger's good opinion, if he had unfortunately endangered it from any thing he had inadvertently been led to say the day before.—Here he came to a stop, and seemed to expect some answer from Sir Roger.

Sir Roger replied, that it was a point with him to enter into no discussion of Lord Crowbery's conduct, especially with Lord Crowbery's relations; his niece was dead, and whatever were her sufferings in this life, they were now at an end: as to Miss Claypole's case, he had nothing to do with it; it was a story he did not wish to lend his ear to; in like manner he begged leave to say, that with respect to any opinions Mr. Hardham might adopt, in favour or disfavour of the Lord in question, he hoped he understood himself too well to interfere in any shape with them, much less was he disposed to revive the mention of a trifling altercation, which was so completely done away to the honour of both parties, and for that reason should be buried in perpetual oblivion.

“Then if I may indulge the hope,” he rejoined, “that my condescension in accommodating myself to the gentleman's vivacity was acceptable to Sir Roger Manstook, let me presume to draw one obvious conclusion from it, and take for granted that he understood the sacrifice to have been, what it truly was, a mark of my respect to him, and an ambition so to recommend myself to his opinion, as to ground some title to his favour and protection in a suit which I have now to make, and on the issue of which the happiness of my whole life depends.”

Mr. Hardham paused for a reply, but none being made he proceeded to explain:—“I flatter myself

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self I need not dwell upon particulars so much within your knowledge, as my family or fortune; they are such, I trust, as will entitle me to credit, when I assert that neither interest nor ambition have any share in the sincere and pure attachment which I profess to have for your most amiable daughter: no, Sir, it is by the heart alone I am attracted to Miss Manstock; and as I hope my character may boldly face the light, and never need the veil of mystery, I hold it fair and honourable to apprise you of my wishes, and request your sanction to the tender of my most humble addresses to your lovely daughter."

Sir Roger paused a while; and then with much gravity, and in a deliberate tone, said, "Your pretensions, Mr. Hardham, in point of fortune and family, are, as you say, too well known to stand in need of any explanation; they are such as qualify you to propose for any lady in this kingdom; and certainly, Sir, in the attachment you profess for my daughter I have every reason to believe you guided by no other motives than those of free choice, and disinterested inclinations. When therefore, you appeal to me, that I wou'd sanction the tender of your addresses to Miss Manstock (I believe I use your own expression) I can have but one answer to make, so long as your reference is confined to but one point, and that simply to demand a passport to my daughter: no father, I believe, whatever may be his views for his child, will refuse that to Mr. Hardham."

To this he replied, "If I have explain'd no further to you on this interesting subject Sir, I hope you will consider it as a very natural wish on my part to owe my success, if I am so blest as to obtain it, wholly and solely to my own interest in the lady's good opinion, who is to constitute my happiness; and as I cannot doubt but Miss Man-

stock is incapable of condescending to bestow her regards on any man of dubious character, or just emerg'd from meanness and obscurity, I trust, if I am permitted to approach her, I shall at least not have to combat with a heart pre-occupied by any rival, or, if by any, not by one that will disgrace her preference, and make me feel myself degraded by the competition."

"As you put no question to me in the matter," replied the Baronet briefly and coldly, "I am not put to any answer.—You have free access to Miss Manstock."

This brought the proud suitor to a pause: he perceived he had gone too far, and carried his language too high; and he saw himself in the necessity of qualifying what he had said with an apology, or throwing up the negociation at once: "I am afraid," said he, "that I have express'd myself too warmly and unwarily; but I entreat Sir Roger Manstock will be assur'd, that I entertain a most profound respect for his person and character, and if I spar'd to solicit his good favour and protection to my suit, it was solely dictated by an ambition, which I hope will be thought both natural and commendable."

"Here he turned his eyes upon Sir Roger;—a silent bow was all the answer he obtained. "I perceive," added he, "I am unfortunate in my manner, and deficient perhaps in something, which in the character of a petitioner I ought to carry about with me; but I am new in the predicament, and having failed to conciliate the father's favour, I will not chose so unlucky a moment for requesting an audience of the daughter. I am not quite prepar'd to receive two rebuffs in the same breath."—With these words he quitted his seat, and Sir Roger rising at the same moment, they

they took a silent leave, and Mr. Hardham mounted his curricule in waiting, highly out of humour with his reception, his proud heart swelling with vexation to find his self-importance humbled; and prepared to vent his spite on two unoffending horses, whose tender skins soon smarted under the ceaseless lash of their unfeeling tyrant.

Oh! what a wretch is man, when pride and self-importance seize upon his heart! the scorn of every noble mind, the pest of all society, a monster amongst men! Begone from me, thou self-swollen blockhead, who art once too foolish for my resentment, and too mischievous for my pity. In some bye-turn and crossing of my walk in life when I chance upon thee, (for nothing else but chance can throw me in thy way) no sooner do I recognize thy staring owl-eyed visage, than I post down a promise in my tablets, to sketch thy gloomy portrait from the life, and hang thee up to public mockery as satire's lawful prize. But when I stretch the canvas, and begin to daub it with thy ugliness, I soon perceive thou dost not own a single feature, that can furnish any thing but loathing and disgust; too dull to help my fancy to a jest, too despicable to inspire it with a serious thought, and too hardened to be mended by correction—I cast thee from my thoughts, discovering thee to be so mere a *caput mortuum*, that no chemistry can extract so much virtue out of thee, as would even serve to give physic to a dog.

CHAPTER IX.

Why is Earth and Ashes proud?

MR. Hardham, instead of returning to his own house, drove to Crowbery Castle, to make report to his friend the Captain, and consult him upon the posture of affairs at Manstock. The advice he got here was on the whole very prudent, but he was not just then in the best temper to receive it. Captain Crowbery, as we have before observed, entertained a very high opinion of Henry, and ever since his rencontre with him had taken all occasions of doing justice to his behaviour, not only in that affair, but in every other that had come to his knowledge, particularly as to the share he had in Carey's action with the frigate. When Hardham therefore spoke contemptuously of him as a rival, and seemed to reproach himself for having stooped to any apology, Crowbery plainly told him that he could by no means be a party in any steps for grafting a serious quarrel on a silly altercation, that had been once fairly dismissed: for his own part, he had been already flagrantly in the wrong towards Henry, and had turned out with him in consequence of it; it must then be a very strong case indeed that would call him out again, either as principal or second.—“And was it not a strong case,” Hardham demanded, “when the character of Lord Crowbery was glanced at in such pointed terms, and in a public company, by a fellow who had no right to use his name, in any place or on any occasion, but with deference and respect?”

“I thought,” replied Crowbery, “that I had opened enough to you in our mornings conversation
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on on this subject to justify the words that Henry used, had they been even stronger than you state them. I can now truly say, that if you and I, as relations of that unhappy man, have any ground left us to stand upon in his defence, we owe it to the candour of the very person you complain of. The melancholy news I received this day, led me to turn some papers over, which, at Blachford's death, were honourably delivered up by Henry, that in some hands would have been arms no mortal could have parried. If he opened them, we are at the mercy of his honour for keeping them secret; if he returned them unexamined, we are indebted to his delicacy for our possession of them. You may believe me, Mr. Hardham, that those papers, which I have now destroyed, would have brought to light very dark dealings, and made the title, that has now by a most dreadful accident devolved on me, a title of disgrace and shame."

Hardham eagerly demanded what accident he alluded to?—"The death of Lord Crowbery," he replied. His Lordship had landed at Ostend, and, from the position of the armies, had been stopt there for some days; in the mean time, a villain, found means to assassinate him in the streets, as he was coming home late at night to his hotel: he was taken up by the patrol, mortally stabbed, and incapable of giving any account of what had passed. Every means had been taken by the commandant for discovering the murderer, but hitherto without success; he had strong suspicions in his mind, which pointed to a certain person, who had closely followed him out of England, but these he would not make public, being determined to set out the next morning, and pursue his enquiries on the spot.—"I am shocked," replied Hardham, "at the account; and whilst I congratulate your
Lordship

Lordship on your accession to the title of your family, I must deplore the catastrophe, that has devolved it upon you under circumstances of so melancholy a cast. If I can be of any service to you here in your absence, or even by accompanying you in your journey, I am at your command."

"Your offer," said the new Lord Crowbery, "is most kind and friendly, and in part I will accept it, as you may be of most essential use and service to me here, if you will consent to put my mind at peace with respect to a family, for whom I entertain the highest reverence and esteem; I mean the house of Manstock. There is nothing lies so heavy on my heart as the treatment they have met with from the unfortunate deceased; I am the last man living that should speak too harshly of Lord Crowbery, my benefactor, but I have been made a painful witness of such things, as make me shudder to reflect upon. I hold it therefore my first duty to make all the atonement in my power to that much-injured family; and in doing this I think I shall approve myself a real friend to the memory of the deceased. And now, my dear Sir, suffer me to appeal to you, and put it to your heart, if in honour you have any just cause of animosity against that excellent young man, who, if I'm well inform'd, is firmly engaged to the lady you proposed for. Is he in the fault of that, or are you warranted to affront and decry him because he is approved of by Miss Manstock, whom you hardly knew by sight, and never thought of before yesterday?"—"I don't know from authority that he is engaged to Miss Manstock: Sir Roger did not tell me that."—"You did not ask him, I believe," replied Lord Crowbery, "but the fact is easily ascertained, if you chuse to take the direct course of applying either to Sir Roger or the lady herself."

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—"I confess to you," said Hardham, "it would not be very pleasing to me to be so informed by either of them, tho' I should not be sorry to come at the truth by any other channel. I am not ambitious to be marked as a rejected suitor to any lady, who prefers Mr. Henry Delapoer."

Here a servant came in, and announced the gentleman last mentioned—"Show him into the saloon," said my Lord, "and say I will wait upon him immediately. You have now an opportunity," said he, applying himself to Mr. Hardham, "of granting me the favour I have requested, if you will condescend to remain here a few minutes, whilst I step out to him, and will allow me to bring him when I return, to take you by the hand, which I persuade myself he'll gladly do: you are both men of honour, and only need to be known to each other to be the best of friends."—"I know you to be such," replied Hardham, "therefore do by me as you think right, and I will wait your pleasure." Lord Crowbery hastened to his visitor—"Am I before-hand with my information," said Henry, "or is it known to you that I am now to address you as Lord Crowbery?" He was inform'd of the event.—"I should have to apologize for this visit," resumed our hero, "if it was not purely on a case of conscience; but I cannot keep a circumstance concealed, that may in any way affect the investigation of a crime so horrible as murder."—Here he recited the conversation of Fanny Claypole, when she forced herself upon him; and concluded with expressing his regret that he had suffered such menaces to pass without taking instant measures for preventing their effect—"If you have any thing to regret on that account," said my Lord, "how much more cause have I to reproach myself, who was so immediately in the way of her

fury, and a witness to the whole torrent of it! but I considered it as the impotent raving of a disappointed woman, and let it pass."—He then explain'd the measures he intended to pursue, for tracing it, if possible, to a discovery, by resorting to the spot—"But before I depart from this place," added he, "upon that mournful business, there is a matter of a most pressing nature on my mind, which I earnestly request you will so far take charge of as to pledge me to Sir Roger Manstock in the most respectful terms, for every satisfaction in my power to make, not only with regard to the liquidation of the funeral expences by him defrayed, but also of my entire acquiescence in the will of the Lady Crowbery, which I suspect there was a meditation of contesting, and at the same time I shall give orders that every article personally appertaining to that lady in this house, which I am sorry to say were permitted to be put out of their places, shall be brought together and collected for his revision and Miss Manstock's, whom I shall request to make choice of any such things which they may put a value upon, as remembrancers of one so worthily lamented and beloved; and this I desire you will tell them I tender as the only atonement in my power to make, on the part of an unhappy man, who, if life had been spared to him, would, I flatter myself, have seen his error, and done what I now do in his name, and in honour to his memory."

"My Lord," cried Henry, rising from his chair, and taking his hand, "I thank you; you have justified the high opinion I conceived of you, and have greatly honoured me by this commission."—Here he stopt, for his voice faltered; and glancing his eyes upon a picture of his mother, over the chimney, which gave a striking character of her in youth and beauty, nature forced her way, and

and putting his handkerchief to his eyes, he yielded to the irresistible emotion, and said no more.

"We will adjourn to the library," said Lord Crowbery, "where a friend of mine is waiting, who wishes to pay his compliments to you. Suffer me only to ask you, before you go, if you think that picture will be an acceptable present to Miss Manstock; and I name her in preference, because I consider it in effect the same as giving it to you. I persuade myself," added he, "I am not premature in supposing her interests and your's are one and the same."—To this Henry made a modest and grateful reply, neither affirming nor denying the assumption above stated; but said he would report to Miss Manstock his most obliging offer. Lord Crowbery then informed him who the person was that expected him in the library; and, after a few words introductory to their meeting, took him by the hand, and ushered him to Mr. Hardham, addressing himself to each in turn with many civil speeches and professions of esteem, hoping it might be his good fortune, as common friend to both, to bring forward such an explanation as might have no grounds for future misunderstanding on the part of either. Mr. Hardham said, he trusted the gentleman could not doubt his readiness to do away affronts, whether justly or unjustly taken up; and he presumed it was no small proof of his continuing in the same disposition, that he had waited his leisure for the sole purpose of paying him his compliments in Lord Crowbery's presence. Henry, on his part, assured him, that he had devoted that morning to the honour of paying him a visit at his own house, but had been told he would be from home. He hoped Mr. Hardham had carried with him no impressions from their last meeting that made a second explanation necessary, respecting any thing which had there occurred; if it was so,
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he was perfectly ready on his part to renew the assurances he had then given him of his entire acquiescence in the manner he had taken for terminating that trivial dispute.

Here the Lord Crowbery interposed ; he hoped there was no intention on either side of looking back to what was past, but, on the contrary by looking forward, to prevent occasion of disputes in future : “ And this,” he added, “ may be easily effected where two men of honour meet, mutually dispos’d to deal candidly with each other, shou’d they find themselves competitors in the same pursuit.”—“ I do not quite pledge myself to that,” said Mr. Hardham ; “ as I wou’d not choose to engage in any pursuit where I did not see myself either fairly pitted against any that might oppose me, or well assured of surmounting competition. Much as I respect Miss Manstock, I have no ambition to be pointed at as her discarded suitor ; and great as my opinion may be of Mr. Delapoer’s extraordinary merits, I must own I do not covet the honour of being known as his rival in a struggle for that lady’s favour, if he has already secur’d her affections, and been approv’d of by Sir Roger as his son-in-law.”

“ And does Mr. Hardham expect,” said Henry, “ that I shou’d account to him for my proceedings, having no desire to make enquiries into his ? Wou’d it become me to speak out of Sir Roger Manstock’s family of what I know or believe to be passing in it ? That I will never do ; these lips shall never presumptuously profane the name of Miss Manstock, nor will I suffer any others so to do in my hearing with impunity.”

“ Then I must take the liberty to tell you—” said Hardham ; and was proceeding, when Lord Crowbery, putting his hand upon his breast, said, “ Stop, I conjure you, Sir, if it be only for my
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fake, and let us argue calmly, or dismiss the subject. I was the promoter of this interview, and am pledg'd for the issue of it. Cou'd I have suppos'd that you, my friend and relation, wou'd have express'd yourself in a stile so lofty and so irritating, I wou'd as soon have burnt this house over my head as suffer'd it to have been made a scene of quarrel and contention. What Mr. Delapoeer has said is not one word too much for the occasion that gave rise to it. How else cou'd you expect a man of honour to reply to such a speech, in which you seem'd to make your own self-consequence your whole concern? Methinks of all men living, Mr. Hardham, you shou'd keep a guard upon yourself, and, being so quick to feel in your own person, shou'd be cautious how you wound the feelings of others. I speak plainly, Sir, but I have the rights of hospitality to protect; and if you are offended with me for it, I must meet the consequences."

All this while Hardman sat with a contemptuous smile upon his countenance, affecting to receive every reproach as a compliment, bowing with an air of counterfeited respect; when perceiving Lord Crowbery had concluded, he replied, "I am infinitely oblig'd to you; my Lord, for your extraordinary politeness, and shall endeavour to convince you that I have not lost one word of your edifying lecture, by the early opportunity I shall take of requesting you to hear the comments I have made upon it."—Lord Crowbery with quickness replied, "Use your own pleasure, Sir; I shall be at home for the day: when you are ready with your comments, I shall expect you; and for security's sake you may bring a prompter with you."

CHAPTER X.

Pride meets its Punishment, and Love its Reward.

"LET him go," said Lord Crowbery, as Hardham bounced out of the room; "he has the pride of Lucifer."—Henry expressed great uneasiness at what had passed, and strongly contended that the affair was his own. This Lord Crowbery would not admit, nor did he look to be farther troubled with his angry cousin; he had had many such sparrings with him, which had passed off as he supposed this would, for he never spared him when he was in that vaunting stile; however, if he should chance to be just then in one of his fighting fits (for his courage came by starts, though his petulance was constitutional) it would not, he owned, be amiss to be ready for him.

Henry hoped he would have no farther trouble with him, felt great responsibility for the consequences, and would hold himself at his call, either in his Lordship's house or at Williams the surgeon's, so long as there was any chance of his services being wanted.—"I will intrude upon you no longer than for two hours of your time," he replied; "within which, if our angry gentleman does not make his appearance, I shall think no more of him; if in that interval you can amuse yourself in this library, or prefer going to Mr. Williams, I will overhaul my artillery in the interim, and put my hand to a few papers not quite so convenient to be left at the issue of chance and accident."

This said, they parted, Henry taking his course to his friend Susan's, where he found Williams and his betrothed, this being the eve of their wedding-day:

day: here he took the first opportunity of telling Williams, in a whisper, the probability there was of an affair taking place, where his attendance would be most acceptable, which he readily engaged for; he then, with as much gaiety as he could assume, made his congratulations to Susan; and whilst this discourse was going on, as he stood by the window, Sir Roger Manstock's chaise was discovered coming across the green, and making directly for the house. It was quickly at the door, when he heard himself joyfully greeted by his beloved Isabella, who was seated at the side of her father. They quitted the carriage, and after a most respectful welcome on the part of Susan, Williams having modestly retired, they were at their own request left in private with our hero.

Sir Roger opened the business, by informing him of Mr. Hardham's proposal, and the anxiety thereby occasioned not only to Isabella, but himself, from the known impetuosity of the haughty suitor's temper, and the dread he had of consequences thence resulting: he would not disguise from Henry that his sudden disappearance that morning, so quickly following Hardham's unsuccessful visit, had so alarmed his daughter, that at her desire he had come over thither with her, in hopes of finding him, as fortunately they had done.—“I let you into this secret,” said he, smiling, “though Isabella is here present, and hears herself betrayed by me, because to say the truth, there is now an end to all reserve between us, and my only wish is to put a final stop to all solicitations, by joining your hands without delay, and rendering my soul's darling into your entire protection: and I pray God to bless you, my dear children, in each other, and me in both!”

Henry, who was seated between them, took the hand

hand of each, and pressed it to his heart in speechless ecstasy. Isabella, suffused with blushes of the deepest dye, and not venturing to raise her modest eyes, which sensibility had filled with tears, kept still silence, which was not interrupted till Sir Roger, resuming his discourse, and addressing himself to Henry, said, "Now if you are questioned by that haughty interloper, tell him you have my authority to say that Isabella Manstock is—(what shall I bid you say?) tell him at once, and stop his importunity—she is your wife.—Now ask her if I've said a syllable too much."

The reference was obeyed upon the instant;—the enraptured lover was at the feet of his mistress the unopposing mistress was enfolded in the arms of her lover.

After a proper portion of time had been devoted to joy and gratitude on the part of our hero, Sir Roger began to comment on the circumstances of Lord Crowbery's assassination. The deed was horrid, the suspicions it involved afflicting, but the removal of such a worthless being out of life was providential; he had seen that unhappy man, the uncle of a desperate creature, stained, as he greatly feared, with the blood of the deceased; he comforted him as well as he could, yet he perceived his mind was immersed in deep despair and melancholy.—"Whether he is informed," said Sir Roger, "of any circumstances that fix the guilt upon his niece, I forbore to enquire, but I should fear he knows more than he thinks proper to reveal."—Henry perceived that Claypole had been less communicative to Sir Roger than to him, for he had actually exhibited to him in confidence a letter under his niece's hand, exulting in the completion of her revenge, and boasting that she had found a hand to punish perfidy; a Frenchman who had been lurking about London for evil purposes, and had

had been warned out of England, took his passage in the same packet with her to Ostend; she found him, and found him the fittest agent for her desperate purpose, being deep in all the massacres that had deluged Paris with human blood: he had made good his escape, and was safe amongst his brother *sans-culottes*; for her part she defied pursuit; she had lodged herself where no search could follow her;—let her uncle therefore set his mind at rest, she should never be heard of more, and bade him everlastingly farewell.

Time had imperceptibly slipped away during this conversation, and Sir Roger had just recollected to order his chaise, when Williams came into the room, and whispered Henry that Lord Crowbery expected him at the castle; in spite of all his self-command, he changed colour at the summons, and Isabella instantly caught alarm. Honour demanded instant obedience to the call, yet Henry's ingenuity could hardly suggest an excuse sufficient to bear him out; the best apology he could devise upon the sudden was, that Lord Crowbery being on the point of setting out for Ostend, and understanding he had had an interview with Fanny Claypole just before her leaving Crowbery, had requested him to come to him without delay.—“Tell me only,” said Isabella, “that you are not going to meet that hateful Hardham, and I shall be at peace.”—“I have nothing to say to Mr. Hardham,” replied Henry; “and I conjure you not to think about him.”—So saying, he hurried out of the room, and bidding Williams follow him as fast as he could, made the best of his way to the place of assignation.

Isabella's apprehensions were by no means quieted, for his agitated looks and impatient motions augured something on his mind more important
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and more pressing than the cause he had assigned. She ran to Susan May, and asked for Williams.—He was gone with Henry.—This was a circumstance to aggravate her terrors: duels and wounds immediately occurred; why else should he take a surgeon with him? Even Sir Roger's equanimity was not proof against this. At one time he would go to the castle himself;—this Isabella would not hear of—he would send a servant to spy what was going forward—he would contrive a message to Lord Crowbery himself;—he could neither reconcile his mind to the one, nor invent the other. The chaise was at the door, but Isabella could not stir from the spot, her fears had rooted her; and Dame May, who foresaw there would be a demand upon her closet, was busied in providing resources against faintings and hysterics: Susan strove to administer the consolation of reason; but no sooner did the apprehension of Henry's danger seize her fancy, than she ceased to reason against imaginary fears, and, by subscribing her own to Isabella's, aggravated both.

In the midst of this confusion, Zachary Cawdle came into the house. A new-comer in such situations, let him come from whence he will, gives a spring to curiosity, and awakens hope.—“Did he know if Mr. Hardham was at the castle?”—“He saw him pass his door towards Lord Crowbery's not many minutes ago.”—It was the sentence of temporary death to Isabella: she fell back in the chair pale as ashes.—“Hell and confusion!” exclaimed Zachary, “what devil has bewich'd my tongue, that it should stumble on this mischief?”—He then bestirred himself to retrieve the damage he had done, and Dame May was dispatched for the requisites, whilst the father stood motionless and aghast. Zachary had his fingers on her pulse:—“Courage! worthy Sir,”
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he cried; "the defection is passing off; the pulsation of the artery is perceptible; we begin to revive."—"God be prais'd!" exclaimed the father, in a transport—When, in the same instant, a voice was heard from without, calling aloud upon Doctor Cawdle, and in a few moments after, Susan, who had run out upon enquiry, came back with the joyful tidings that Henry was perfectly safe: Zachary's assistance was wanted for Mr. Hardham, who was shot by Lord Crowbery in a duel.—"Jump into the chaise," said Sir Roger, "and bid them drive to the wounded man's relief as fast they can gallop."—"Fair and softly, worthy Sir," quoth Zachary; "I can neither jump nor gallop to his rescue: Williams is on the spot and is well used to gun-shot wounds; he only wants me as surgen's mate."—Zachary now with due deliberation seated himself in the chaise, and the messenger, having mounted behind it, gave directions where to drive. Hardham was found on the ground, and Williams had just then succeeded in staunching the hæmorrhage; the ball had entered a little above the knee, and had lodged itself by a slanting course up his thigh, as he stood in a crouching posture when he gave his own fire and received that of his opponent almost at the same moment. He fell, and fainted on the ground; when he came to himself he was earnest with Williams to be taken to his own house, but in this he was not indulged: when Zachary arrived they found means to convey him into Lord Crowbery's house; and Henry now, at the earnest wish of his principal, took Zachary's seat in the chaise, and hastened back to the party at Susan May's. Great was their joy at his return, and every countenance (but chiefly that on which his eyes were first fondly fixed) was brightened at his presence. To them he related the particulars of the rencontre,

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in the event of which the overweening pride and insolence of Hardham, who was obstinate against all accomodation, was proportionably chastised.

CHAPTER XI.

The Drama closes, and the Curtain falls.

HENRY accompanied the chaise to Manstock House, and to gratify Isabella no less than himself, was hardly ever out of sight by the way. Hardham, in the mean time, was deposited with all possible care in the house of his antagonist: during six days Williams, who remained in the closest attention, found no moment when the operation of extracting the ball could be undertaken with safety to his life, which remained in so precarious a state, that Lord Crowbery felt himself obliged to postpone his intended expedition; and sent his lawyer, properly instructed, to pursue all necessary measures at Ostend on his behalf.

On the seventh morning Williams successfully extracted the ball, and symptoms became so favourable as to flatter him with a cure. Some time after this, Hardham was carried to his own house, and Lord Crowbery's mind was relieved from its weight of anxious suspense: his journey, however, was now entirely laid aside from the report of his agent, whose attempts to trace the murderer had been entirely fruitless: the body of the deceased was brought over, and committed to the vault of his ancestors.

Williams was in such favour with his patient, that no other surgeon was permitted to approach him. One important business there was, in which the

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the fair Susan had a share, that suffered a postponement by his attendance upon Hardham; the matrimonial knot was not yet tied: this, indeed, in the present case, was simply the delay of a ceremony; and the very first leisure morning Williams could with a safe conscience avail himself of, that ceremony was effectually performed; and Susan took possession of that honourable title, which her fidelity and good conduct ever after maintained, through a series of many prosperous and happy years.

In Manstock House, Love took his station undisturbed by any cares or interruptions, save only those chaste tremors, which the gentle breast of Isabella, felt whilst Time, for ever on the wing, was weaving the soft silken fetters, now almost complete and ready for the hand of Hymen, that artist who too often makes but blind and bungling work, coupling ill-sorted pairs with coarse and clumsy tools. Not such our hero and his fair betrothed—lovely in person, lovelier in their virtues, their soft and tender hearts melted into each other with a coalescence so entire, that soul with soul never more sweetly harmonized: yet sometimes, when the ardour of his looks alarmed her, she would chide him with her blushes; sometimes, she would turn away and hide her face, or bid him go from her and join the company; this had he done, he would have misunderstood the spirit of the order totally, instead of which he had a way of making peace, that nature pointed out, which gained him pardon by repeating the offence.

"You are incurable," she would tell him at these times, "and I give you up; another time I'll lock my door, and keep you out."—The minutes still rolled on, and yet the door was not locked; the offence

fence was still committed, and the menace, though repeated, was never executed.—“What are you musing upon?” she said one day, as he sat rapt in thought.—“I am reducing days to hours,” he replied, and hours to minutes, that I may calculate each fraction of the interval ’twixt this and Monday.”—“Added to it another year,” she cried, “and you’ll be nearer to the sum. Don’t talk of Monday, I’ll not hear about.”—At that moment the porter’s bell announced an arrival. Isabella ran to the window, and descried Doctor Sandford coming up to the door.—“There, there!” she cried, “you are all together in a plot against me: I’ll not go down to Doctor Sandford; much as I esteem him, I’ll not quit my chamber this whole day; I know for what he comes.”—“To bless your Henry, by entitling him to call the loveliest object in creation his; he comes to ratify the vows that I have made, to honour, love, and serve you with my life; and what is there so terrible in this, that shou’d disturb my Isabella’s gentle spirits? What does the ruler of my passions discern in her devoted Henry, that she shou’d shrink from with affright? Command me, talk me as you will, and I’ll obey, so you do not forbid me to adore you and doat upon you as I do this moment, have done ever, and to life’s latest period ever must.—Say, Isabella, are these arms, thus pressing, thus encircling you, bonds that you wish to break, chains that you fain wou’d sever and cast from you? Question my heart, ’tis your’s; ask if there’s mercy in it for my Isabella; mark if it does not throb with tender pity and compassion for your virgin fears; and witness if the drops that fall from it are half so dear as these which your soft eyes distil. Oh! my soul’s treasure, are you not at rest upon this faithful bosom? Do you not feel

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feel a conscious satisfaction, thus to know yourself below'd, protected, cherished by a friend, who lives but on your smiles, nor has a sense of earthly happiness, but what the contemplation of your charms bestow upon him?"

"Oh Henry," she replied, and sunk upon his breast, "I render you my heart, and all that it contains; even my terrors are fled from me, and nothing now remains but all-subduing love: your words, your looks, bespeak such mild consideration for your poor trembling Isabella; and I well know there is such mercy in your manly nature, that I am yours this day, this hour, this instant, and for ever."—Silence ensued, what else their thoughts supplied, love found expressions for, more eloquent than words: the minutes were not few; but, rated to their value, they had outweighed years of common price.

Isabella now was not averse to welcome her late dreaded visitor, the worthy Doctor Sandford—severed from the arms of her enraptured Henry, with love in every glance, and grace in every motion, she came forth in beauty's richest bloom, a form to charm all eyes, and captivate all hearts.

Every body was occupied in preparations for the approaching journey: great as was the sacrifice Sir Roger made to the peace of the county, when he took upon himself the painful duty of attending parliament, there were some circumstances that qualified the disagreeable necessity at the present moment, as he had affairs of great consequence on his hands with respect to Isabella's marriage, which could only be adjusted in London. Mr. Delapoer, the father of our hero, had also business not less important, and agreed to accompany him; and a house large enough to receive the whole party, and perfectly commodious, had
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fortunately been secured for Sir Roger, and was already well aired, and occupied by part of his household, sent before him for that purpose. His plan was to have the wedding on the morning of his departure, and as private as possible. The Rev. Mr. Claypole, in a bad state of health, was gone to bath, and Dr. Sandford had been invited from Hagley to perform the ceremony. The bride and bridegroom were to take their departure together, and reach town that evening; Sir Roger, Delapour, and Sandford were to follow in the family coach by easy stages, and sleep by the way.

On the morning before these events were to take place, Henry rode over to Crowbery, and took a friendly leave of the Lord of the Castle; he had also a parting conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Williams and the good Dame; to Ezekiel he devoted a full hour, which the good man filled up, after his manner, with admonitory lessons for his conduct in the metropolis, that sink, as he pronounced it, of infamy and corruption. Ejaculations, prayers and blessings in abundance he cordially super-added; and at last let him depart with this exhortation—That if affluence and prosperity should await him, he would never forget that he had felt the sorrows of poverty and distress; but on the contrary, if disappointments and misfortunes (which Heaven avert!) should prove to be his lot, then let him take religion to his aid, and place his whole reliance on that all-gracious Master, who never fails his servants in affliction when they piously resort to him.

The awful morning arrived, and Isabella, beautiful as an angel, and fresh as the dew of Heaven, rose with the dawn; and having attired herself with a simplicity pure as her thoughts, and elegant as her manners, came forth from her chamber,
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and presented herself to the eyes of her expecting lover: he led her down the stairs to the room where her friends were assembled, and the Rev. Dr. Sandford was in readiness to perform the solemn office, and pronounce the nuptial benediction; which service being closed, turning to her father, whilst Henry yet held her trembling hand, she dropt on her knees at his feet, and jointly with her husband, in the like reverential attitude, received his fatherly blessing, accompanied with tears of joyful sensibility and tender embraces: the same suit was preferred to the father of Henry; and the same affectionate return was made to it by that amiable person, in a stile peculiarly impressive and affecting. A few old and faithful domestics were admitted; and honest Zachary Cawdle, by claim derived from long attachment, and services as old in date as the first breath that Henry drew, was present on the occasion; and now, in his ardent manner, joy boiling over at his eyes, pronounced them to be indisputably the most lovely couple that ever plighted their faith to each other—"And, by the blessing of Heaven," added he, "upon their laudable endeavours, I predict they will give being to others as beautiful as themselves.

They now sat down to a hasty breakfast, which being dispatched, Sir Roger again embraced his daughter, and then resigning her hand to its happy possessor, attended them to the door, where their chaise with post-horses was in waiting, which whirled them in their rapid course to London; where they arrived, with happy omens, as the evening closed, and found all things ready for their reception.

The following day the worthy Baronet, punctual to his appointed hour, arrived with his friends, Mr. Delapoer and Dr. Sandford, the latter of

whom took up his abode with a relation at the other end of the town. Sir Roger was well pleased with the airy situation of his house, and still more delighted with the unremitted attention of his son and daughter, who devoted to him and Delapoer all those hours which some bestow on frivolous amusements, some on less innocent occupations. In the course of their residence here every thing that the sage provision of the law could do for them and their posterity was completed; and at Sir Roger's suit, our hero had a grant, by royal licence, to take the name and bear the arms of Manstock, thus becoming the adopted representative of that antient and opulent house.

When the session was closed, and they returned to the family seat at Manstock, the festivities they had fled from were celebrated with becoming splendor, and the hospitable doors were thrown open to their neighbours, both rich and poor. Heaven blessed their days with prosperity, and crowned their wishes with a beauteous offspring. Faithful to Ezekiel's charge, Henry never forgot the lessons of adversity, nor those faithful friends whom his adversity had tried and approved — To Zachary, to the house of Williams, and to Ezekiel, in his humble cottage, he was ever the same grateful, cordial and unaltered friend. The charge of young Blachford's affairs he devolved upon Ezekiel, with a proper allowance, but still under his own superintendance; Lord Crowbery also put the good apostle into certain offices of trust, which brought him some profit, and, what was more grateful to his spirit, a situation of some respectability amongst his neighbours. Williams thrived in his profession, and Susan was not wanting to provide him with those that served to keep his house aside and his industry alert.

Delapoer

Delapoer retired to his mansion near Hagley, where he had every year the pleasure of embracing his children, when they visited their maternal mansion and property in those parts.

If perfect happiness was ever dealt to mortals, it was surely the peculiar lot of Henry and Isabella. —Domestic harmony that knew no interruption, hearts fondly united, and tempers happily matched, the good will of all who knew them, the abundant gifts of fortune, and the grateful blessings of the poor, compounded their enjoyments. Meanwhile the beauteous form of Isabella never yielded up one fleeting charm to the wide-wasting hand of Time, but Heaven restored the loss by adding every hour fresh beauties to her mind.

F I N I S.

